

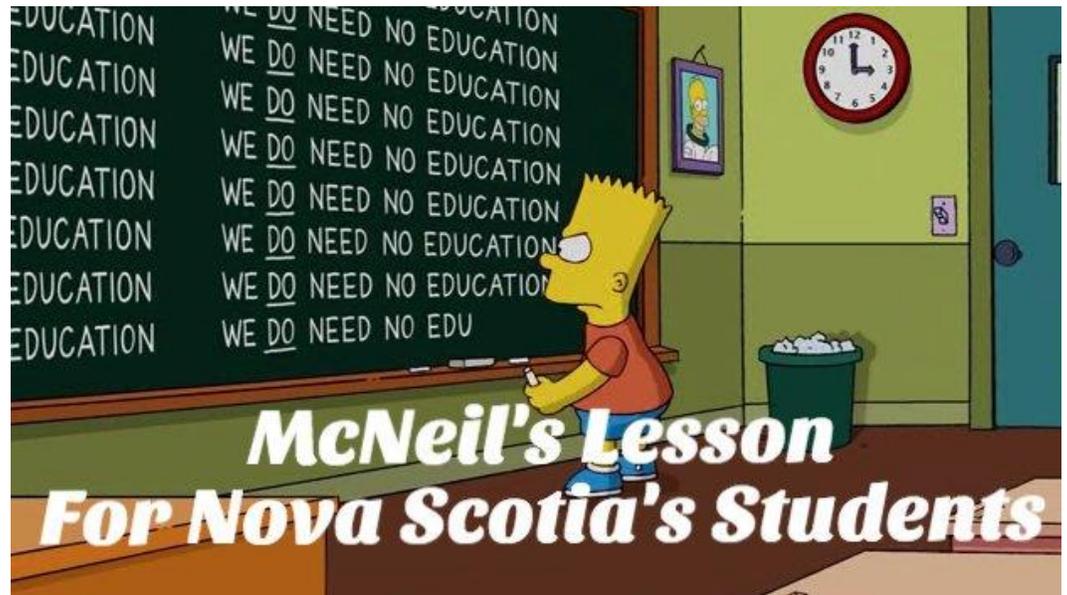
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## The AUFA President Communicates

Dear AUFA Members,

Of the many topics that I might write about for my first message to our members, I decided to focus on recent events that, although difficult for many, have actually given me a small glimmer of hope for the future of labour and education in Nova Scotia. Faculty associations around the world work to preserve academic freedom and tenure in collective agreements, and I am motivated to contribute to that work through my involvement with AUFA because I believe it is fundamental to protecting high-quality, publically funded education.



Recent events in Nova Scotia, however, have convinced me that the focus of my work, the university sector, has been too narrow. Specifically, I point to the ongoing contract negotiations between the Nova Scotia Teachers' Union (NSTU) and the Government of Nova Scotia. Teachers in Nova Scotia began bargaining with a clear goal – they want improved working conditions so they can be more effective teachers. Bargaining has been incredibly difficult, however. They faced interference from the government early in the process with the passing of Bill 148, *The Public Services Sustainability (2015) Act*, legislation that places significant limits on the scope of negotiations for all public service employees just as its sister legislation Bill 100 does.

*Giving too much power to the government to make decisions about public education is risky, especially at a time when the world needs well informed citizens to navigate a sea of “alternative facts.”.*

Talks at the negotiating table were largely unproductive, with the government reportedly unwilling to agree to much in the way of change, even within the limits imposed by Bill 148. Despite these difficulties, twice the NSTU bargaining team and Executive recommended a tentative agreement to their membership and twice it was rejected. Teachers, it would seem, have decided that it is time to fight for a better learning environment – something that will benefit teachers, of course, but also students. They were, not surprisingly, also unhappy about low remuneration offers and the loss of the long-term service award. What has followed is a very public display of the battle between teachers and the NS government. Teachers enacted work-to-rule job action and Karen Casey, Minister of Education, effectively locked-out children from their schools, citing safety concerns if teachers limit their activities to their contractual obligations. The “lock-out” was short lived, but, importantly, it caught the attention of people in the province and beyond. Rallies were organized, and a clear message was delivered to Karen Casey and her government: Teachers have support for their fight to improve working and learning conditions in the classroom, and anti-labour tactics, though often effective in this province, are not necessarily going to work this time.

As I write this, teachers are once again working outside their required duties for the betterment of their schools and a 3<sup>rd</sup> tentative agreement is being debated in advance of a vote on February 8<sup>th</sup>. Already concerns are being raised about the acceptability of the deal, including questions about whether the agreement to establish a commission to investigate inclusivity will address sufficiently the problems raised by teachers as part of their bargaining position.

Regardless of whether teachers vote to accept this third tentative agreement, their battle has brought the conversation about problems in our school system to a broader public space. People are paying attention, and, if the response to the shutdown of schools is any indication, they are willing to stand up for better education. This is where I find hope in the struggles of the NSTU. Even if their new contract cannot deliver the change they were hoping for, there are lessons to be learned from their experiences, perhaps the most important being that collective action can be effective.

Educators need to work collectively to fight for quality education at all levels; better education for public school students means stronger university students, and stronger university students make stronger citizens. Giving too much power to the government to make decisions about public education is risky, especially at a time when the world needs well informed citizens to navigate a sea of “alternative facts.” I am inspired by the NSTU’s willingness to engage in difficult negotiations and labour action in an effort to improve their working conditions, and I am encouraged that the issues have been brought into the public discourse. I encourage people to think about how they might join the discourse to keep the fight for improved, publicly funded education going at all levels, including but not limited to our own. I do not think this is a battle we want to lose.

-- Darlene A. Brodeur, President, AUFA

## CAUT Defence Fund

### Funding Our Defence

The CAUT Defence Fund has been its usual busy self. This year alone we have approved strike benefits, loans, and trustee support for six faculty unions across the country: Cape Breton University Faculty Association; Wilfrid Laurier University Faculty Association (Contract Academic Staff Unit); Concordia University of Edmonton Faculty Association; University of Manitoba Faculty Association; Algoma University Faculty Association—that's right, another AUFA! – (Contract Academic Staff Unit); and Association des bibliothécaires, professeurs et professeurs de L'Université de Moncton.

In addition to administering the Defence Fund, AUFA's trustees participate in or coordinate flying and driving pickets. Fortunately, UMFA signed an agreement after only two weeks on strike. More recently, CBUFA have avoided a strike by reaching a tentative agreement on the contentious Article 39, the layoff clause.

I attended the Defence Fund Annual Meeting in Montreal on October 19, where the highlight of the meeting was an update on collective bargaining from various associations across the country over the past year. In addition, there were concerns expressed about the size of the Defence Fund, which is currently in excess of \$27 million, in that if it becomes too large for its purpose the Canada Revenue Agency may take an interest. However, for about the last ten years the fund has represented about 14 days of strike benefits per member of strike pay if every member were to simultaneously strike. In the past, the fund had reached as high as 24 days per member but that was when the membership was much less than half its current level. It was suggested that an actuarial study be done, but no action was taken.

The CAUT Defence Fund is an affiliate of the Canadian Association of University Teachers, separately incorporated under the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act. The purpose of the Defence Fund is to provide strike benefits to associations while its members are engaged in a strike or lock-out. These benefits are paid as a grant to the association, to be used at the local union's discretion, usually as strike pay for individual union members. Fund of up to \$35,000 are also available for mediation or interest arbitration to those unions whose collective bargaining rights or right to strike are being impeded or who are being subjected to unfair labour practices or bad-faith bargaining.

The Defence Fund, which dates from 1978, provides a unified strike fund for 54 academic staff member associations (as of October 15, 2016). Our member association numbers continue to trend up as new faculty associations join.

-- Jim Grant



CAUT Defence Fund  
Caisse de défense de l'ACPPU

# AUFA Women's Committee

## An Update on our Activities

The AUFA Women's Committee (AUFA-W) has a mandate to promote awareness around women's issues and gender equity in the Acadia University workplace. As a committee, we do this by facilitating networking, education, and learning opportunities for all faculty. The current members of the committee came together in the fall of 2015 and over the last year and a half, we've been working to organize and support events that contribute to this important mandate. We'd like to briefly share some of the events AUFA-W has been a part of this year.

In October, AUFA-W organized a screening of the documentary "Highway of Tears" at the Al Whittle Theatre. This documentary focusses on the missing or murdered women along a 724 kilometer stretch of highway in northern British Columbia. It explores the effects of generational poverty, residential schools, systemic violence, and high unemployment rates for First Nations, and how these tie in to the missing and murdered women on the Highway of Tears. The documentary was introduced by Darlene Copeland Peters, Sandy Peters, and Kayla Mansfield, who shared some of their personal experiences as Indigenous women and also provided information about the Sisters in Spirit and Moose Hide campaigns that work to bring attention to the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous peoples. The screening brought together approximately 100 people from both Acadia and the greater Wolfville community. A freewill offering was accepted at the door for the Sisters in Spirit organization, and together, we were able to raise \$540 to support the important work of this organization. The documentary was donated to Acadia's library and is available for classroom and personal use.

AUFA-W also hosted a Winter Social at the University Club in January. This was an opportunity for faculty to come together, meet new colleagues, discuss research and teaching, as well as issues related to women and gender on campus. The event was well attended with requests to hold such informal events more often.

AUFA-W has also sponsored several events that support the committee's mandate. These include: The Women in Leadership speaker series, which in October featured the Honorable Anne MacLellan; the December 6 ceremony remembering violence against women, which took place at the Wolfville Farmers' Market; the book launch of Acadia professor Dr. Erin Wunker's *Notes from a Feminist Killjoy*, which was held at the Box of Delights Bookstore in December; and the Women's March on Washington held in Wolfville in January.

Every year, AUFA-W organizes an event for International Women's Day (IWD). This year, we are very excited to be welcoming Canadian Senator Wanda Thomas Bernard who will give a talk to celebrate IWD. Appointed in 2016, Senator Bernard is the first African Nova Scotian woman to sit in the Senate and is known for her leadership both in research and community service related to Nova Scotia's Black community. Senator Bernard is a recipient of the Order of Canada and has been a professor at the Dalhousie School of Social Work since 1990. Her talk will take place on March 9 at 5:00 PM at the KCIC auditorium and we will be promoting this event further as the date gets closer. We hope that you will be able to join us for this talk and that you will encourage your students and members of the community to attend as well.

As members of AUFA-W, we're very proud of the work we get to do to promote women's issues and gender equity at Acadia. If you have ideas about other events the committee can support or help to organize, we always welcome suggestions.

Finally, we'd like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank Svetlana Barkanova for her contributions to AUFA-W. Many people likely already know about the incredible work Svetlana has done to promote women in science at Acadia and throughout Atlantic Canada. She was a member of AUFA-W until December and the events we just described were successful in no small part because of her. Thank you, Svetlana.

-- Erin Crandall, Randy Newman, Mary Sweatman, Britanie Wentzell

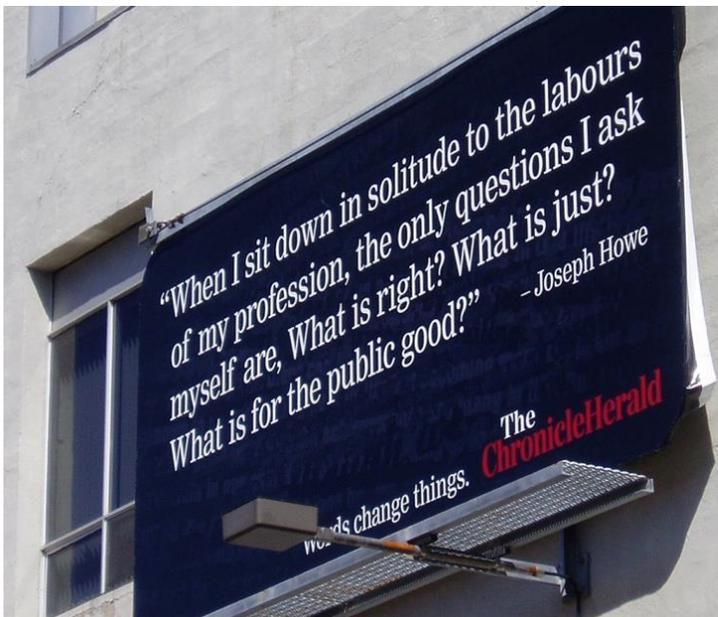
## De-Alienating Labour: Voices from the Field

### Media Workers Locked Out? The One-Year Anniversary of the Herald Strike

The strike by members of the Halifax Typographical Union (HTU) employed at the *Chronicle Herald* was one-year old on January 23, 2017, making it one of the longest walkouts in recent Nova Scotia labour history. Ian Scott, Chief Operating Officer at the *Herald*, seemed particularly insensitive in his comments to the CBC on the eve of the anniversary, apparently equating the challenge of operating the paper without experienced workers with the plight of those same workers.

The workers have been asked to agree to terms that represent an existential threat to their bargaining unit, terms which are impossible to accept without bringing about the decertification of the bargaining unit. The employer, on the other hand, has felt little pain as it has continued to operate with replacement workers.

Replacement workers, or scabs, are allowed under Nova Scotia's trade union legislation, but have been banned in Quebec and British Columbia. Scabs make strikes more bitter and prolong conflict. This and other employer practices over the first year of the strike have drawn criticism for reporting errors and a lower standard of accountability, as well as whether journalists can enjoy working conditions at all that allow them to contribute to effective public debate.



The McNeil government, and specifically the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education, has come under criticism. The tough approach to public-sector negotiations taken by the Liberal government may have encouraged private-sector employers to take a much more aggressive approach to collective bargaining.

The Minister, who has been criticized for Bill 100, the Universities Sustainability and Accountability Act that could lead to the suspension of collective bargaining and strikes at cash-strapped universities, was also criticized for her article appearing in the *Herald* just a day after the striking workers laid a complaint, through her, to the Nova Scotia Labour Board. However inadvertent, the article's appearance exhibits insensitivity and poor judgement. While the Minister has agreed to pass on the complaint to the Labour Board for investigation, she declined to get involved in the labour dispute.

The HTU filed the complaint in mid-November, alleging unfair labour practices under Section 35 of the Trade Union Act. In a letter to the Minister, the union alleges that the employer is bargaining in bad faith with the intention of ending union representation and preventing the conclusion of a collective agreement. Moreover, in spite of concessions by the union on major monetary items worth millions over the life of the agreement—including wage cuts, pension changes, and layoffs—the employer is insisting on changes to the union's jurisdiction and scope, as well as on workers' job security. The changes demanded by the employer would undermine the integrity and viability of the bargaining unit, and would lead to decertification.

Danny Cavanagh, President of the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour, has called for an industrial inquiry commission to allow the facts in dispute to be aired and to bring about agreement between the two sides. For its part, the union has asked that the complaint be adjourned while an attempt to restart negotiations is explored.

-- Jim Grant

## Insights into the New Activists Workshop

### CAUT New Activists Workshop

Last November I had the opportunity to attend the day-long New Activists Workshop held right before the 2016 CAUT November Council. Although the event happened on a weekday of a very busy week during the semester, I was happy to make arrangements to attend. I deemed attending the workshop pertinent since I have been an AUFA member for only a few years and I am currently serving on the Proposal's Committee for the new Collective Agreement. The New Activists Workshop was advertised as a fast-paced event focused on encouraging a new generation of academic staff to become involved in their associations. This, I must say, was exactly what the organizers delivered.

We had an early start where we could register and have breakfast with other participants. The tables in the room were set up in a way that would encourage people to sit with other participants during breakfast so as to start interacting before the activities began. The morning activities were designed to allow the participants to identify and discuss different issues and challenges facing academic staff. General themes that emerged from these discussions were: governance, underfunding, workload, precarious employment, academic freedom, equity and diversity. This section of the workshop ended with a discussion of the role of academic staff associations in dealing with these issues to build inclusive workplaces for the creation and dissemination of knowledge. We were offered refreshments and lunch in the same room where the workshop was taking place, which promoted further interaction with other people and allowed for the quick building of relationships among participants. This strategy became important for the teamwork activity that was reserved for the afternoon session. For the next section of the workshop we had a series of ten-minute presentations on activist skills. The skills presented included talking to members, filing grievances, creating attractive visual materials, making effective smartphone movies, and communicating through media. The ten-minute experts were very insightful and able to convey, in a nutshell, the main elements of the topics they presented along with very useful tips that could be applied right away. For the last portion of the workshop we had to put together a campaign to address a complex challenge to academic staff. The scenario illustrated many of the different challenges that had been identified and discussed during the day. We worked in small groups moderated by the corresponding ten-minute experts to create the following products: a grievance strategy to address the issue, material (poster, flyer, button, etc.) to educate members and the public about the issue, a video on the issue and the association's response to it, and a press release, as well as a press conference to publicize the issue.



Creating the campaign was a very clever way of having us incorporate what we had discussed and learned during the day. The moderators provided expert assistance and helped the groups stay on topic and on track. In little over an hour the different groups created their products. My group put together a video that seemed polished enough to be used right away. Although no member of the group had particular experience in video production and editing, we were able to deliver our product. In the last hour and a half of the workshop we presented each part of the campaign and discussed with the whole group the rationale behind the finalised products. I was really impressed by what we accomplished in the workshop. In the course of one intense work day, we went from identifying and discussing issues facing academic staff and learning strategies to confront them to creating a campaign where we put this newly acquired knowledge into practice. Coming out of the workshop, I felt as though I had acquired a set of new tools and new contacts that will provide expert help in case of need. I gained new appreciation for the importance of the work that we do as an association and I also gained motivation to keep working to maintain and improve the conditions of our academic workplace.

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Just as advertised, CAUT New Activists Workshop was certainly a fast-paced event that encouraged me to support and stay involved in our association.

-- Juan Carlos López

## U4: Questions Asked & Answered

### A Primer

The Maple League is a group of four Canadian universities – Acadia, Bishop’s, St. Francis Xavier, and Mount Allison – that share some key characteristics: they are public liberal arts institutions with fewer than 5,000 students, most of whom live on campus. As this year’s academic representative to the Maple League, I am working with my academic counterparts at the other three schools to enhance student and faculty experience at the Maple League schools. We are very newly constituted and are still exploring the group’s potential, but already at this early stage a number of initiatives are underway. One of these was the revitalization of Axe Radio, with a view to creating a platform for students at the four institutions to share podcasts with each other. Another initiative is the introduction of a small number of Maple League courses, which allow students to participate in specialized classes that they would not otherwise be able to take, and to interact with students at other Maple League institutions. A third initiative this year is the annual Up For Debate weekend, hosted by Bishop’s University. The weekend involves students from all four schools participating in a business case competition, a debate competition, and TEDx talks by students and faculty. This year’s team includes thirteen Acadia students.

We are a new and evolving group. We often come up with more questions than answers, and we are always looking for more “people power.” There are many ways to be involved, so please be in touch if you have questions, ideas for events or want to connect.

-- Alice Cohen

## Lois Vallely-Fischer Award for Democratic Student Citizenship

### Support for Critical Thinkers

The Acadia University Faculty Association (AUFA) has instituted an annual award, valued up to \$2,000, for a student in the final year of undergraduate study at Acadia. The Lois Vallely-Fischer Award for Democratic Student Citizenship recognizes the contributions of a senior baccalaureate student who has contributed to the quality of democratic discourse, critical thought, and legitimate contestation in campus or community life, and who has demonstrated leadership in defending student political rights and the interests of disadvantaged groups.

The deadline for receipt of applications for the 2017 Lois Vallely-Fischer Award will be 21 March, 2017. Applications should be sent to Jane Longley, AUFA Office, Acadia University or dropped off at Huggins Science Hall, Room 211. *Please note that the nominators are responsible for providing information and comments in support of their nominee; this material is the basis upon which the decision is to be made.* To nominate a student for the award, the nominator will submit an original letter outlining the reasons why the nominee should be considered. The letter must be signed and accompanied by at least four signatures of others supporting the application (for a total of five signatures).

Nominations may be made by students and/or AUFA members. Award recipients will be selected by a committee of AUFA members and will be presented with the award at the Association's annual general meeting in April. In addition to the monetary award, the recipient(s) will receive a memento, and their name(s) will be embossed on a plaque in a permanent location in the Student Union Building.



Sadie Moland (left) donating \$1,000 from her 2016 Lois Vallely-Fischer Award to Acadia Community Farm Coordinator Sarah Boudreau (right).

## Welcoming New and Returning Faculty

### Introducing Acadia to Itself: Part I

Over the next several issues of the *Communicator* we will introduce you to new and returning faculty members. In this issue we welcome four new tenure-stream professors and one full-time instructor. As evident is from their biographies, we will all benefit from the knowledge and talents these individuals bring to our campus community.

**Joseph Hayes** is an experimental psychologist who completed his PhD at the University of Alberta. He has held teaching appointments at Wilfrid Laurier University and Colby College, as well as postdoctoral fellowships at York University and the University of Waterloo. He uses a biopsychosocial approach to understand how people react to threats such as failure, uncertainty, uncontrollability, meaninglessness, and the awareness of impending death. His current work examines withdrawal-oriented responses to such threats (e.g., giving up), and the consequences of withdrawal for emotional and psychological well-being. At Acadia, he teaches courses in Personality Psychology, and Statistics and Research Methods in the Department of Psychology.

**Mojtaba Kaviani** teaches Human Nutrition and Advanced Sports Nutrition and is the leader of the sports nutrition group at the School of Nutrition & Dietetics. His primary research focuses are sports nutrition and exercise physiology, and his main research interests are metabolic responses to nutritional interventions, glycemic control and diabetes, and pulse-based diet and health. He is also a certified exercise physiologist with the Canadian Society of Exercise Physiology.

**Can E. Mutlu** teaches International Politics and Security Studies in the Department of Politics. His research interests include different aspects of contemporary security practices, including: Border Security, Migration and Refugee Studies, and Technology and Security. His current research looks at the material dimensions of global mobility regimes, including border security technologies, port and border architectures, data infrastructures, and the increasing role of machine learning and algorithms in border security and customs processes. Can received his PhD from the University of Ottawa. Prior to coming to Acadia he was an Assistant Professor of International Relations at the Bilkent University in Ankara, Turkey.

**Nicole Nolette** teaches courses in Acadian Studies as well as in French language and literature. Her research interests include Canadian theatre, translation theory, and comparative literature. Nicole received her PhD in French Language & Literature from McGill University. Before coming to Acadia, she was a postdoctoral fellow affiliated with the Cultural Agents Initiative at Harvard University.

**Stephanie Jones** is an experimental psychologist who completed her PhD at York University in Toronto. Following a post-doctoral fellowship at Dalhousie University, Stephanie joined Acadia's Department of Psychology as a full-time instructor. She is currently developing and implementing an introductory Psychology laboratory curriculum so as to introduce students to Psychological research, research methods and data collection and analysis concepts. Her research interests include measuring attentional abilities in healthy adults across the lifespan, as well as those affected by stroke and Parkinson's disease (PD). Stephanie is also interested in understanding how the brain uses proprioceptive information, alone or with other sensory information (e.g. visual information), to guide perception and action.

--Randy Newman

## Dates to Remember

### Preparing for Negotiations: Timeline

The AUFA Proposals Committee (PC) has been working to identify the key principles that will form the basis for negotiating our next Collective Agreement. Our work is guided by the results of the first membership survey carried out over the summer, by the roundtables held in the fall, and by additional feedback from members. Our work is also informed by concerns identified by the AUFA executive, the Association Grievance Committee, and the Joint Committee as we've lived with the current Collective Agreement over the past two years.

The PC is now compiling from these inputs a list of principles to propose as the basis for upcoming negotiations. We will present these principles to the membership at the regular AUFA meeting on **February 28**. This meeting will give all members the opportunity to think about the principles and the rationales behind them. Following this meeting, the list of principles as well as the corresponding initial contract language will be posted to the AUFA website for members to review. Finally, on **March 9** a special membership meeting will take place to allow members further opportunity to discuss the merits of the principles proposed for upcoming negotiations. At the end of this meeting there will be a vote on these proposals, the results of which will give the negotiating team its mandate for the 15th Collective Agreement.

The next step will be for the PC to receive feedback on the initial contract language drafted to put these principles into effect. In the meantime, a second membership survey will take place to determine which principles have top priority for members; the results of this survey will be used to guide strategy at the negotiating table. According to the current Collective Agreement, negotiations must start at the latest by **May 1**, and if all goes well should be completed before the current Agreement runs out on **June 30**.

--Stephen Ahern, Chair, AUFA Proposals Committee

## Editorial Policy

### Connecting the Membership

The AUFA Communicator is a newsletter of the Acadia University Faculty Association (AUFA) and is intended to keep its members and the Acadia community up to date and informed. The AUFA Communicator is published twice during the academic year and serves the following purposes:

- to provide a means for the free exchange of ideas, views, information, and issues relevant to AUFA and the Acadia community;
- to provide feedback and information useful for AUFA to maintain its effective operation in fulfilling the objectives of AUFA and its membership;
- to provide documentary records of matters pertaining to AUFA;
- to serve all the functions of a newsletter

The Communicator Committee, under the direction of the AUFA Executive, takes responsibility for the contents of the AUFA Communicator. Opinions expressed in authored articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Communicator Committee. We encourage your contributions (letters, articles, article summaries, and other pertinent information). Anonymous material will not be considered for publication; however, under special circumstances, the AUFA Communicator may agree to withhold the author's name. The Communicator Committee retains the right to edit and/or reject contributed material.

Without the efforts, support, and solidarity of the membership none of this would be possible. In lieu of this, appreciation must be extended to those who help put together this issue of the *Communicator*: Stephen Ahern, Rachel Brickner, James Brittain, Erin Crandall, Jim Grant, Randy Newman, Jessica Slights, Mary Sweatman, Britanie Wentzell.