

# MUFA Newsletter

December 2009/January 2010 — Volume 36.3 — Alexandre Sévigny, Editor

## President's Report

*delivered at the General Meeting on December 10, 2009*



2009 has been a pivotal year for McMaster and for the Faculty Association. It is the end of an era in which President Peter George is, for many faculty, the only president they have ever had. When a single administration remains in place for so long, the distinctive characteristics of its philosophy and style emerge clearly. In this case, McMaster, along with many of its peers, has adopted a business model of governance, which has, to a significant extent, been driven by administrators and Board members who are not familiar with or in some cases, are not even comfortable with the culture of academia.

Mirroring the evolution of the business world, McMaster has succumbed to financial excesses in ways which have left it stretched and vulnerable. It has created a top-heavy administration, which, in spite of being well-staffed and well-rewarded, seems incapable of dealing effectively with the obvious, major problems in which the University is mired. It is often distracted by new adventures, and, at the same time, there has been a steady deterioration of resources available for teaching Faculties in the face of increasing demands.

Interestingly, over the past 18 months, the World's business and financial systems, which McMaster and many other universities tried so hard to emulate, have collapsed, because the principles by which they were guided turned out to be empty excuses for greed, which in many cases was not easily distinguishable from fraud.

Things move more slowly in academia and so the lessons that the World has learned so harshly are just starting to penetrate here, but the time has clearly come to learn from the mistakes of others, as well as our own, and start to chart a better course.

What does this have to do with the Faculty Association and what has the Association been doing to protect and support its members and the welfare of the University. I'd like to take a minute to remind all of us of the purpose of the Faculty Association as described in our constitution, which can be paraphrased in summary as follows:

1. The Association promotes academic freedom and the interests of faculty and librarians, and encourages the active participation of its members in the governing processes of the University.
2. The Association promotes excellence in teaching and research.
3. The Association represents its members on all matters of remuneration, working conditions, tenure and promotion.
4. The Association represents its members on the Joint Committee which considers all of the matters above and which discusses, negotiates and has the authority to revise relevant policies.

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## President's Report *(continued from p. 1)*

So basically the purpose of the Association is both to promote the welfare of its members and to help the University succeed in its academic mission. How has the Association done in fulfilling this purpose?

Well, in some sense we must have failed at a certain point by allowing the University to get into the sorry state that it's in. However a few years ago, it became clear that faculty needed to get more involved, and some members, who were serving on the Executive, ran for elected positions on the Board and Senate. Since the Association also has observer status on these bodies, we started to have more of a voice.

It was crucial to have faculty voices on the Board because of the impending Presidential search. Initially faculty were a discordant voice, but, by sending a consistent, principled message, being patient, and engaging individual Board members, the cumulative effect was that our voice was heard. In the end the Presidential Search Committee, which included three former MUFA presidents, listened carefully, through town hall meetings and individual submissions. They heard the message which was echoed across the campus and then searched for and seemingly have found a new president who will respect the academic roots of our institution and refocus on our mission of research and education. What I want to emphasize here is that without effective representation by faculty on the Board, which the Association promotes but does not actually do itself, the outcome would have almost certainly been very different.

This is the way that our collegial system works. When faculty participate actively and cooperatively in the governance of the University, then the University will stay focused on its mission and do well. This service to the University is an integral part of our academic duties. It promotes awareness and develops expertise among faculty in the inner workings of the University. If we leave the governance of the University to professional administrators, then we have only ourselves to blame for the unsatisfactory results. Furthermore, I cannot overemphasize the importance of cooperation and respect among faculty in the collegial governance process. Faculty Senators, Governors, and UPC members must work together and with the Association to maintain effective control of the governance system. This is an area where we still have much to learn.

The activities of the MUFA Executive over the past several months are best described as multiple crisis management. Following two unprecedented and ill-considered firings of librarians, we provided assistance to the affected librarians and explained to the Administration in the bluntest of terms that these events represented a failure of our system. The issue of job security for librarians has moved to the top of our agenda. This issue is complex and we are presently working to extract it from the bog of unworkable procedures. In the end, the Faculty Joint Committee will take over and deal with this issue.

The financial crisis, which like the month of March, came in like a lion, has now morphed into a relative lamb, much to the disappointment of those who would never let a good crisis go to waste. In the meantime we are left to deal with a request by the President to agree, in mid-contract, to increase our pension contributions to match the increases agreed to by CAW in their recent contract settlement. Extensive consultations with our membership have revealed an almost unanimously negative view of this request. Nevertheless we will continue to search for possible responses to the President's request which would be beneficial and agreeable to our members and to the University at large.

The issue of pensions and future benefits remains a hot-button one with certain members of our Board, and dealing with both perceptions and substantive benefits issues will remain on the front-burner, although our position is that these must be viewed in the context of the Total Compensation package. Pension discussions will also be affected by new Federal and Provincial initiatives to upgrade Canada's pension system.

The Faculty Association continues to deal with a host of major and minor issues and to assist faculty when problems and questions arise with respect to promotion, tenure and working conditions. The work is done by dedicated volunteers, who serve on the Executive or work on a multitude of committees. We need many more such volunteers. We are also blessed by dedicated, knowledgeable and extremely competent staff, Phyllis and Kelly who provide extraordinary service to the Executive and to all of our members. When I think about my experience with MUFA, I am often struck by two things. One is the interaction with colleagues who are accomplished scholars in their own fields and who operate at a high intellectual level. When the MUFA Executive publishes a document or puts forward a

policy which has been reviewed multiple times by this group, you can be sure that it is well conceived and thoroughly vetted. Secondly, I am constantly reminded of the fact that, in light of the enormous turnover in University personnel over the past several years, it has been left to MUFA to preserve McMaster's institutional memories and, to a great extent, its principles and values. This would not have been our choice, since we would have preferred that these memories, principles and values would permeate the entire institution, and hopefully they will in the future.

In closing I would like to express my extreme gratitude to my colleagues, our past and past-past presidents, Richard Stubbs and Peter Sutherland, who have worked closely with me on the Joint Committee and who have had to endure countless e-mails and have helped me avoid making errors in judgment on more than one occasion. I would also like to welcome our Vice-President, Virginia Aksan, back from her research leave and on to the Joint Committee where I am sure she will represent us well.

John Berlinsky

## MUFA represented at Lakehead Protest

Alex Sévigny went to Lakehead University in Thunder Bay as representative of MUFA to participate in a protest against the Lakehead administration's decision to put faculty and staff on a four-day furlough to save money. The protest was very well attended, with representatives from across Canada participating. On the morning of December 21, a group of approximately 300 people marched 1.5 kilometres from Lakehead University Faculty Association's (LUFA) off-campus headquarters to the main university building to find locked doors. Rousing speeches were delivered by CAUT members, as well as members of other labour organisations about the regressive nature of furlough as a solution to Lakehead's operating budget problems. In a moment of ironic levity, Santa Claus even made an appearance, delivering stockings emblazoned with the names of the senior Lakehead

administration and filled with coal. While the mood was quite positive, the resolve of the protesters was firm — everyone was united in condemning the actions of the Lakehead administration and the terrible precedent it would set if the furlough survived the appeal process. In his speech, James Turk, Executive Director of CAUT, highlighted the negative precedent set by the Lakehead administration's decision to impose furlough and break the contract with faculty without negotiating with or consulting LUFA. The protest garnered significant local media coverage, as well as a widely read blog post by globecampus.com writer, Joey Coleman (<http://bit.ly/6Cjuv4>).

This Newsletter is published monthly between September and May by the Faculty Association at McMaster University. The Association's Executive for 2009/10 is composed of the following members:

President	John Berlinsky
Vice-President	Virginia Aksan
Past-President	Richard Stubbs
Academic Affairs	Nancy Bouchier
Human Rights	Bonny Ibhawoh
Library	Rick Stapleton
Membership	Marek Niewczas
OCUFA Director	Richard Stubbs
Pension	Khalid Nainar
Public Relations	Alexandre Sévigny
Remuneration	Herb Schellhorn
Spec Enquiries & Grievances	Peter Sutherland
Tenure	Martin Dooley
Treasurer	Gladys Peachey
Without Portfolio	Michelle MacDonald
■ ■ ■	
Executive Director	PhyllisDeRosa Koetting
Administrative Assistant	Kelly McCaughey
Returning Officer	Matheus Grasselli

Opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of the authors and do not represent the views of the Association or of its Executive unless so specified. Anyone wishing to contribute to the MUFA Newsletter is invited to send submissions to the Faculty Association Office (HH-103A, e-mail: [mufa@mcmaster.ca](mailto:mufa@mcmaster.ca), ext. 24682). Deadlines are the 15th of each month. All submissions will be published at the discretion of the Editor. Current and past issues of the MUFA Newsletter are posted on the MUFA website ([www.mcmaster.ca/mufa](http://www.mcmaster.ca/mufa)).

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# Call for Nominations

## The MUFA Faculty/Librarian Awards for Outstanding Service

### PURPOSE

The purpose of these awards is to provide an annual recognition for faculty and professional librarians who have made an outstanding contribution to the University through the provision of exceptional service to faculty, librarians, staff, students or alumni.

### THE AWARDS

Each year there will be a maximum of three awards in the amount of \$1,500.

### ELIGIBILITY

The awards are open to all members of the McMaster University Faculty Association (MUFA).

### PROCEDURES

1. The MUFA Executive has appointed a chair and committee drawn from amongst the categories of faculty, professional librarians, staff, students, and alumni. The Secretariat to the committee is the MUFA Executive Director.
2. The period of the award is a calendar year.
3. Nominations
  - a. Nominations must be e-mailed (mufa@mcmaster.ca) or mailed to MUFA (Hamilton Hall 103A) no later than

**March 15, 2010**

- b. The nominator must attach a supporting narrative of not more than 750 words.

- c. Each nomination must be supported by a minimum of 2, and not more than 4 reference letters. These reference letters must be e-mailed or mailed, either through the nominator or independently. Reference letters should not exceed 500 words.

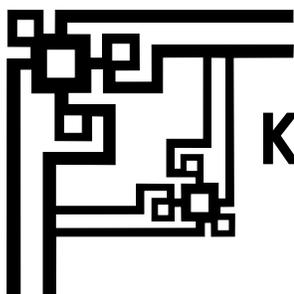
- d. Position and contact information for the nominator and all references must be clearly indicated.

4. The Committee will review the nominations. Among the factors considered by the Committee will be:

- enhancement of the reputation of McMaster University
- provision of excellent service
- demonstrated innovation
- breadth and depth of impact
- strength of support in nominations

5. The faculty/librarians selected to receive the awards will be invited to attend a special reception following the Annual General Meeting in the spring and will be presented with their awards at that time. Pictures of the individual recipients and a brief summary of the rationale for their award will be published in the MUFA *Newsletter* and on the MUFA Web page.

6. Each faculty/librarian who is nominated for an award will receive a letter of commendation from the MUFA President.



# Know Your Benefits

## Caregivers

Are you looking after sick children, a spouse in distress, or providing palliative care for seniors? Many faculty and librarians are unaware of the resources available to them when they become caregivers. During these difficult times, there is no need to deal with this alone.

Your chair/supervisor and, if appropriate, your Dean should be made aware of the situation so that they can assist — this is especially important for pre-tenure faculty. Too often the silence of the caregiver, who shows signs of stress at work, leads to interpretations by colleagues and staff that can add more pressure to the situation.

Consult the *Policy and Procedures on Employment Accommodation* (see <http://www.mcmaster.ca/mufa/handbook/accomm.htm>), especially the section headed "Family Responsibilities". You will find helpful advice regarding how to balance your family and work obligations.

An important source of support for those dealing with caregiver issues is through the University's Employee and Family Assistance Plan (EFAP) provider, Human Solutions. The Human Solutions website is available at: <http://www.wilsonbanwell.com/>. Individuals are able to contact Human Solutions directly to seek assistance in dealing with a wide range of issues. This can include finding support for the caregiver. A quick review of this website also shows links to Counselling, On-Line courses, Wellness Tests, Health Companion, and Child and Elder Care. A tremendous amount of material on

support services is available under the Child and Elder Care link, including material for caregiver stress.

In addition to the EFAP program, Human Resources offers information sessions on topics such as mental health and workplace health and wellness. These are scheduled at various times in the year as part of their Healthy Workplace programming, or may be scheduled as requested. Employee Health Services also includes professional support resources, including Dr. Allan Rosenfeld, Consulting Occupational Physician, and Dr. Stanley Dermer, Occupational Psychiatrist. These professionals do not 'treat', but provide expert consultation to assist with workplace issues, workplace absences or accommodations. Discussions with these physicians are provided on a referral basis through Employee Health Services.



## Housing

### Condominium Sublet

Short-term condominium sublet available

for any time frame between January 2010 to August 31, 2010. Partially furnished one-bedroom condominium unit with modern kitchen, dishwasher, microwave, solarium, jacuzzi tub, underground parking and storage, cable and internet. Lots of windows with western exposure. Located at Queen and Main on the bus route and walking distance to Locke Street and downtown areas. Perfect for a visiting professor or graduate student. \$1000/mo (utilities incl). If interested, please contact Lauren at [pontarld@univmail.cis.mcmaster.ca](mailto:pontarld@univmail.cis.mcmaster.ca)

# Project Status Report

(as of January 20, 2010)

Project Name	Estimated Completion Date	Approved or Anticipated Budget	Status
<b>Project &amp; Budget Approved</b>			
McMaster Front Entrance Improvements - Phase 2	Pending	\$4,900,000	Preliminary design work complete. First stage of landscaping to be implemented following the completion of the Engineering Technology Bldg.
MUMC Biosafety Lab 3 (FHS)	Pending	\$2,500,000	Working drawings are 90% complete.
MUMC Farncombe Family Digestive Health Research Inst.	Summer 2010	\$5,500,000 (rev Nov/09)	Demolition work has commenced. Roof work underway.
Ron Joyce Centre (Formerly Burlington Campus Centre for Advanced Management Studies [CAMS])	Fall 2010	\$26,824,000	Site plan approval received. Structural steel complete. Masonry and exterior glazing has commenced.
Nuclear Reactor/NRB Renovations	March 2011	\$22,000,000	Detailed design complete. Site servicing review complete. Working drawings and specifications are 25% complete.
IWC Centre for Spinal Cord Injury Education, Research & Rehab and Centre for Cancer Education, Research & Rehabilitation	March 2011	\$20,000,000	Renewal work on existing roof of IWC and emergency power improvements complete. The floor plan has been signed off and the consultants are 25% complete drawing stage. Review of mechanical and electrical infrastructure in IWC complete.
<b>Other</b>			
City of Hamilton Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Tank	Fall 2009	City of Hamilton Project	Construction approximately 85% complete. Project will extend into Winter. Parking Services aware of situation.
McMaster Innovation Park CanMet Building		MIP Board approval to proceed with sourcing of financing & finalization of lease	Ellis-Don Construction Ltd. Has completed all concrete work. Interior masonry and exterior glazing commencing.
McMaster Innovation Park McMaster Centre for Primary Care	Summer 2012	\$40,000,000	Recommendation for program approval to January 2010 Planning and Building Committee. Architect selection in progress.

For Future Consideration			
Wilson Building for Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences (Liberal Arts Building)		\$50,000,000 to \$60,000,000	Revised submission to MTCU expected in January 2010. Long Term Capital Planning Submission to MTCU (Aug 2008). Development of a Functional Plan is on-going
McMaster Innovation Park Life Sciences Building		\$45,000,000	MIP developing concept design
Above Ground Parking Structure			On hold pending campus wide parking review
New Pool			PanAm Games Bid – project under review.
Sports Arena			Offsite Location
Tennis Courts			

Nominated by the MUFA Executive, **DAVID HITCHCOCK** (Philosophy), has received the **CAUT Dedicated Service Award** in recognition of his exceptional service to the Faculty Association. Congratulations, David. You deserve the thanks of the MUFA membership for your efforts on their behalf.

## Welcome New Members

**Joseph Beyene** Clinical Epid & Biostatistics  
**Kai Huang** Operations Management  
**Sang-Tae Kim** Geography & Earth Sciences  
**Changchun Xie** Clinical Epid & Biostatistics

Many thanks to **Ian Hambleton** (Mathematics & Statistics), **Graeme Luke** (Physics & Astronomy), and **Daphne Maurer** (Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour) for agreeing to sit on the **Budget Advisory Committee**. **Yvonne Lawlor** will represent the School of Nursing on **MUFA Council**. Thanks also to **Terri Lewis** (Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour) and **Joanna Pierazzo** (Nursing) who will sit on the **MUFA Nominating Committee**.

### Passages

**Robert Horvath**, Civil Engineering, November 27, 2009

# 2010/11 Executive

If you are interested in serving on the Faculty Association Executive or know of someone who would make an excellent candidate, please complete the form below and mail to the Nominating Committee, Faculty Association, Hamilton Hall 103A. If you prefer, give us a call (ext. 24682) or drop us an e-mail note (mufa@mcmaster.ca). DEADLINE — FEBRUARY 15, 2010

CANDIDATE \_\_\_\_\_

FACULTY \_\_\_\_\_

RANK \_\_\_\_\_

PORTFOLIO PREFERENCE \_\_\_\_\_  
(E.G., academic affairs, grievances, human rights, library, membership, OCUFA, pension, public relations, remuneration, tenure)

DEPARTMENT \_\_\_\_\_ CAMPUS ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

EXTENSION \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_



A voluntary organization such as MUFA can succeed in serving the interests of its membership only to the extent that the members participate in formulating and executing policy. At any given time, approximately two dozen individuals carry the burden for all of the members and after a few

years most of them are exhausted by the tasks which they have voluntarily borne. Their valuable experience and wisdom is then lost to us. The best way to lessen this attrition of talent is for more of the membership to give some time and effort to the Association. If you are not interested in putting your name forward for the Executive Committee, please use the form below to let us know if you would like to participate in MUFA's efforts by serving on one of the following committees.

✂-----

Yes, I am interested in working more closely with the Faculty Association. My interests are:

- |                  |                          |                  |                          |                          |                          |
|------------------|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| MUFA Council     | <input type="checkbox"/> | Membership       | <input type="checkbox"/> | Grievances               | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Academic Affairs | <input type="checkbox"/> | Pension          | <input type="checkbox"/> | Tenure                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Human Rights     | <input type="checkbox"/> | Public Relations | <input type="checkbox"/> | <i>Ad Hoc</i> Committees | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Library          | <input type="checkbox"/> | Remunerations    | <input type="checkbox"/> | Special Assignment       | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Are there other areas where the Faculty Association might be useful to its members? \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ EXTENSION \_\_\_\_\_

DEPARTMENT \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Return form to McMaster University Faculty Association, HH 103A