

FSA Newsletter – May 2013 (via email)

As reported in March, the FSA is issuing occasional e-mail updates instead of newsletters while we go through a staffing process. I'm pleased to announce that Kyla Epstein will be joining the FSA office this summer as Member Engagement Officer. With the office re-staffed, we'll be renewing efforts to connect the FSA and its members beginning in the fall.

How to Reach the FSA Labour Relations Representatives

To manage staff workloads and ensure that priority matters get the attention they need, we're making changes in how members identify new issues to the FSA office. All new inquiries by phone, e-mail, or walk-in visits will be received by a designated staff person. If an answer is readily available, we'll provide that immediately. Otherwise, we'll try to advise the member of what additional information is likely needed to action their request and the matter will be passed on to the appropriate representative for a response within one working day. This process will allow us to direct inquiries to the reps who are most available or best positioned to handle the issue and allow them uninterrupted time to deal with matters already in front of them. Please direct new inquiries or issues for the FSA office to BCIT_FSA@bcit.ca or 604-432-8859.

Strike Pay Deadline

Members who have not yet claimed strike pay for the job action in November and December must do so before May 31. This deadline will allow for all strike pay to be processed during the current fiscal year. We have posted [information on claiming strike pay](#), including the strike pay claim form, on our website.

Job Action Grievances

Following the job action in the fall, the FSA filed four grievances relating to 29 claims regarding the administration of pay relating to the strike days. One grievance has been upheld and the member will be paid for a previously scheduled leave. The FSA believes it has demonstrated a violation of the collective agreement in another grievance and expects it to be upheld or it will be recommended for referral to arbitration. We are awaiting the employer's position on about ten cases relating to sick leave. Several other claims are no longer being pursued as the members have not validated their leaves for the days in question. In an additional case relating

to Professional Development leave, the parties are clarifying their respective positions in the hopes of reaching a mutually agreeable resolution.

Hours of Work

We are attempting to get a new agreement with BCIT on work outside of regular hours (8:30-5:30). Without a new agreement, FSA members in both the Library and ITS will revert to the regular hours of work on June 1 and the FSA will not be approving new proposals for work outside of hours. We recognize the need for work to be done outside of hours and believe that agreements that provide for that should also recognize the significance of concessions made to the collective agreement provisions that limit the employer's ability to schedule outside of hours. We would be very interested in hearing from members in all departments about how they would be affected if FSA members in ITS and Library are restricted to the regular hours of work.

Three Hour Break

During the last round of bargaining, the FSA gave a lot of attention to issues around the three hour break for union activities. Unfortunately, no agreement was reached. Given the lack of a new agreement, we advised the employer we would seek to enforce the rights we currently have as we're doing with hours of work agreements. We also advised management that they are accountable for violations of the agreement relating to the three hour break. FSA members in Timetabling have now been directed by their manager not to action requests for rooms during the three hour break (Wednesdays from 2:30-5:30) without the agreement of the FSA. Anyone asking Timetabling for a room during the three hour break is now being redirected to the FSA. We are endeavoring to respond to requests within 24 hours.

The Closure of Document Services

BCIT has notified the community that Document Services operations will close on May 31. The FSA spoke to BCIT management about this when the move was announced. Management decided to go ahead with the move with the intention of trying to mitigate impacts in departments that now rely on Document Services. We are hearing from FSA members in different departments that they expect to experience significant impacts due to the closure. We are asking members to identify to us any additional work they need to take on as a result of this change.

Get Out and Vote

Post-secondary education has become a major issue in the current provincial election campaign. The extent of provincial government involvement in your employment has never been more evident. Government oversight is applied to every agreement reached between the FSA and BCIT. BCIT bargains under a very tightly controlled provincial mandate. The provincial government has also made several significant changes in how it funds post-secondary institutions in areas like capital spending and requiring carbon offsets. The FSA strongly encourages all members to inform themselves about issues relevant to their work at BCIT and cast a ballot in the upcoming election. We've proven that BCIT and its faculty and staff can be influential on the provincial scene. That's never more true than when we vote in an election. Advance voting takes place Wednesday May 8 through Saturday May 11 from 8 am to 8 pm. Election Day is May 14. *The Election Act* entitles all employees to have a block of four hours between 8 am and 8 pm on Election Day in which they can cast their vote without any loss of pay. For most FSA members, that block of time will likely be between 4 pm and 8 pm.

General Meeting and All-Candidates Meeting

The FSA General Meeting to review and approve a budget for 2013-14 will be held tomorrow, May 8 at 2:30 in SW5. [Please note the change in location](#) to accommodate the All-Candidates meeting which will follow. Candidates in Burnaby North for each of the four main parties have agreed to attend the meeting which will be open to all members of the BCIT community including students and managers. The All-Candidates meeting will begin at 3:00 in SW5.

Paul Reniers

Executive Director

BCIT Faculty and Staff Association

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