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BCIT FSA VOICE



President's Message:

Bargaining and the BCIT Education Plan



Peter Fenrich
President

There are numerous things that we (the Board and staff) are particularly hearing a lot about. These range from bargaining to the BCIT Education Plan, to the lack of consultation by some managers, and, to no surprise, parking. In this message, I will focus on bargaining and the BCIT Education Plan.

Although it is debatable whether we truly should call it bargaining when we are mandated to receive a 2% wage increase for each of three years and some petty cash beyond the wage increases, we have many proposals prepared that address numerous concerns of our members. Some of our proposals address issues that fall under recruitment and

retention difficulties. We have data that proves our recruitment and retention challenges are real. These challenges put BCIT's Strategic Plan, Education Plan, brand, and reputation at risk. Senior management has not denied that our recruitment and retention issues exist. The question is, "Will management support us in fighting for (i.e., by taking our concerns forward to the PSEA) what is needed to protect BCIT's success in the future?" I truly hope that they do the right thing.

We have received valuable feedback regarding BCIT's Education Plan. From a conceptual perspective, there is some support for "Interdisciplinary Programming", "Open Multi-Disciplinary Credentials", and "Shared Centres of Competence". Interdisciplinary Programming can "model real world collaboration" and help to "break down the silos". Open Multi-Disciplinary Credentials enable "flex-

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VOTE! Nov 4 – 15

Voting for the FSA by-election takes place November 4 – 15, 2019.

Don't forget to vote! If you don't receive your electronic voting credentials on Nov 4th, please contact the FSA.



President's Message continued

ibility for students” and “stackable credentials”. Shared Centres of Competence “can be energizing and enriching and provide opportunities for collaboration and synergies” and “increase BCIT’s reputation in new areas of work”. However, there are numerous concerns that need to be addressed. Will BCIT provide support to those on the front lines? Release time, training, and management and administrative support are needed to make these initiatives a reality. Is there truly industry support when only 16% of industry says that this is “exactly what my company needs”? Our reputation has stemmed from our graduate’s depth of practical knowledge. Will a “diluted” credential be respected by industry? Given what BCIT is

respected for and that generalist credentials are offered by other post-secondary institutions, how sure are we that enough students will want the credentials? My sense is that there is cautious support for the BCIT Education Plan. The key to success is management ensuring that implementation is done right.

For me to advocate for you, I need to know what your concerns are. I will always find the time to meet with you or your department. My Outlook calendar is up to date. You can see when I am available using Outlook’s Scheduling Assistant tool.



FSA Staff Report: Working for Members

In the 2019 FSA membership survey, a small number of members raised concerns that “the FSA” spends too much of its time on social justice or diversity and inclusion issues. A small number of members mentioned that “the FSA” needs to do more to defend their rights. While these voices may only represent a small group of members, we want to acknowledge these concerns and explore them with you.

Critical to this exploration is the question: who is “the FSA”?

The FSA is you, the membership. It is a collective and, like all trade unions, is member-driven. As members, you hold rights to elect representatives to govern, approve the budget of the organization, participate in FSA activities, and speak up for the changes you want to see. As members of a union, you are part of something bigger than yourself and your power to affect change for yourselves and for public-sector workers across BC comes from working together.

The FSA staff and board are committed to our vision, mission, and values (see back cover). This includes the value of social justice which aligns with BCIT’s newly articulated value of diversity & inclusion. This commitment, and related actions, do not detract from our core purpose but rather enhance our obligations under human rights laws as well as align with the FSA-board’s adoption of the Truth & Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action and FSA member-led initiatives focused on equity and diversity. The membership of a union won’t always agree on all things but that can’t stop a union from respect-

ing the dignity and human rights of individuals.

As FSA staff our work flows from the directions set by the membership – informed by general membership meetings, Tech Rep input, member consultation, and your elected board. Our work is also guided by our obligations to hold up the laws we are subject to including the BC Labour Code, the BC Society Act, the BC Human Rights Code, and other relevant legislation. Upholding, and advancing, the rights in your Collective Agreement is our primary focus of work and we count on members to be a part of this work.

Our staff team isn’t in your day-to-day work spaces but you are and you are the FSA! Speak up, if you can, when you see things happening in your workplace that are not ok and, if needed, contact your Tech Rep and the FSA to let us know what’s going on. Even if we aren’t the right ones to answer your question (e.g. questions about an extended health claim being denied can be directed to Manulife) we want to know what’s going on for you.

Our work is better when you are involved. We encourage all members to participate in general meetings, sit on FSA committees and caucuses, fill out surveys, and to speak up about what matters to you. A member-driven association will best reflect its members when more members participate. We recognize that time is limited in your BCIT lives and we wish we could manufacture more of it – in lieu of that, please don’t hesitate to let us know if there are ways we can remove other barriers so that you can more fully participate!



At the FSA Office...

- Staffing up – you’ve heard a lot in our e-bulletins about how we are working to fill staff vacancies.
- FSA board has approved funding for a pilot position - a 1-year Junior Labour Relations Rep – this will support the FSA in addressing our case backlog.
- We are addressing roadblocks with our member issues database and building an in-house tool that is better suited to supporting members.
- FSA labour relations team is making improvements to triage approach to handle high flow of intake coming from members.
- All staff are working to support the Chief Negotiator and your Bargaining Team.
- Completed FSA Board Governance Manual and FSA Office Procedures Manual.

SELECTION COMMITTEES: NEW HIRES & SALARY PLACEMENT

Our collegial hiring process recognizes that our faculty and staff are the experts in their fields and are best able to identify who will do the best job of preparing and supporting the next generation of technologists. For similar reasons, Article 5.2.3.3.5 entitles Selection Committees to recommend where new hires should be placed on the salary scale.

Article 11 sets out the rules for placement on the scales. Applying these rules often requires knowledge of the field and of the work to be performed at BCIT. Selection Committees can take initiative on placement by applying their informed judgement on questions like the equivalency of credentials and the relevance of employment experience. Make sure your new colleagues get proper credit for the education and experience that have prepared them to join your department.



Member Profile

Sudip Talukdar is an FSA member in the Civil Engineering department of BCIT. Sudip's interests and expertise are in the fields of construction materials and structural engineering. His current research interests include developing alternative cementitious materials, investigating different non-destructive test methods for masonry blocks, and looking into the development of testing standards for shotcrete. Alongside his teaching responsibilities at BCIT, he continues to work part-time as a Field Engineer with Metro Testing Laboratories in Burnaby, BC.

How long have you worked at BCIT?
6 years.

Which living person do you most admire?
I admire the strength of the Dalai Lama.

If you had \$1-million to give to a cause, what would you select?
Not one in particular, but would like to establish a trust to promote sports and recreation for young people in underdeveloped countries.

What's your favourite place on the campus you work at?
The Rix.

What motivates your work?
My students. Seeing both their struggles, as well as their successes drives me to be a better instructor.

If you could live anywhere, where would it be?
Vancouver of course!

The future of public post-secondary education is...
Dependent on the standards public high schools choose to set.

One word to describe the FSA?
Well-meaning.

What is the greatest issue facing BCIT?
Complacency.

Do you have a non-work related passion or hobby? What is it?
Right now, riding and maintaining my motorcycle

What is a course/class you would like to take?
Would love to take classes to learn as many world languages as possible.

What lesson has working at BCIT taught you?
The biggest challenges as an educator occur outside of the classroom.



What makes a workplace healthy?
Enthusiastic, considerate and helpful colleagues.

What could you use right now if someone would invent it for you?
A time machine which would increase the number of hours in the day from 24 to 48!

What motivates you to be involved with (or support) the FSA?
To maintain the privileges and rights the union has established for us.

What is the best book you have read recently?
Don't know if it was the best, but the last book I read was 'Born a Crime' by Trevor Noah.

What most inspires you?
My students



What was your first paying job?
Warehouse Clerk at Canadian Tire

If you had to choose an occupation other than your current one, what would it be?
If I could handle the stress and the hours, I think I might have tried for medical school...

One way to make meetings better:
Pizza!



For this feature, the FSA borrows from Marcel Proust (and others who have popularized the French author's questionnaire), as a way for you to get to know our members, board members, and staff.

FSA Labour Relations Team Message:

To Grieve or Not to Grieve

Occasionally, FSA members express apprehension and misunderstanding about grievances and how the FSA handles them. This article answers frequently asked questions and clarifies common misunderstandings about grievances.

What is a grievance?

Grievances are formalized disputes described in the Collective Agreement, which provides for two types of grievances of interest to FSA members: Employee Grievances (Article 3.4) and a Union Grievance (Article 3.5). Both types of grievances may ultimately be decided by an arbitrator, who makes a decision after holding a hearing and/or reviewing written submissions from both parties.

FSA staff prioritize addressing concerns before a conflict becomes intractable. We move proactively to intervene in situations constructively rather than waiting until after events unfold. We try to resolve formal grievances through discussion and clarification of the issues that appear to divide us. This approach is usually more effective for FSA members and better for BCIT. However, if a matter needs to be decided by a third party, the FSA will not hesitate to go to arbitration.

What issues do grievances cover?

Grievances can address any difference between the FSA or a member and BCIT concerning the application, operation, or alleged violation of the Collective Agreement. For example, we have filed grievances concerning: harassment and discrimination; improper selection processes; breaches of compensation provisions, like administrative allowances or PD provisions; and the protection of the rights of PTS instructors (Auxiliary Employees under Article 4.3).

Are grievances secret?

Not necessarily. However, grievances frequently touch on private or sensitive matters, which require confidentiality. Keeping disputes confidential can also provide more opportunities to settle them. One of the parties might only agree to certain terms if the agreement promises confidentiality and non-disclosure. Upon resolution, whether

we can speak publicly about a grievance depends on the terms of settlement. In those instances, we cannot discuss the outcome with anyone beyond the immediately affected individuals. The Institute is similarly bound.

How long does the grievance process take?

Many factors affect the length of the grievance process. Sometimes resolution takes longer because we try to use each grievance to address any related or systemic issues. Instead of resolving each file individually, we engage with BCIT to address the factors that gave rise to the case in the first place. We think that taking more time to deal with underlying issues is a better use of our resources than dealing with each instance separately and having other members experience the same problems in the future.

Are members protected from retaliation when they file a grievance?

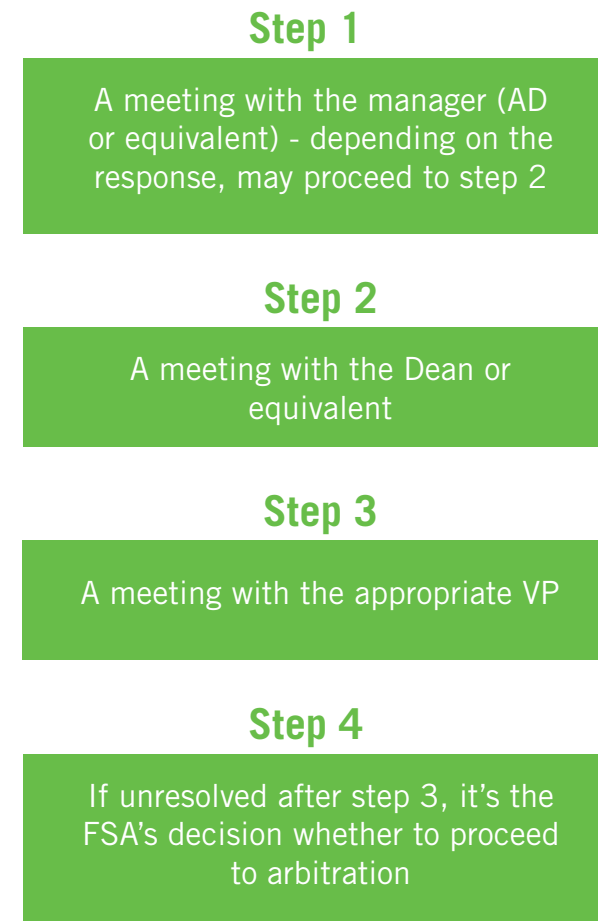
Both the Collective Agreement (Article 1.7.1) and the law protect union members who participate in legal union activities, such as filing grievances, against retaliation by the employer. Nonetheless, we know members may be cautious about coming forward. It takes courage to raise a red flag in challenging circumstances. The FSA is conscious of this reality, but also relies on members to keep us informed and to stand up when they see things that call for correction. If a member is not comfortable being identified with a grievance or a less formal complaint process, we work with the member to find alternative ways to address the situation.

The Life Cycle of Employee Grievances and Union Grievances

Employee Grievances:

- Can be initiated by any FSA member, with or without FSA assistance
- Follow a three step process: beginning at Step 1: a meeting with the manager (AD or equivalent); and depending on the response, may proceed to Step 2, a meeting with the Dean or equivalent; and then Step 3, a meeting with the appropriate VP
- If the grievance is still unresolved after Step 3, it is the FSA's decision whether the grievance proceeds to arbitration

Employee Grievances can be initiated by any FSA member, with or without FSA assistance.



Union Grievance:

- As the name suggests, is initiated by the FSA
- Can be utilized for one or more individual employees, as well as groups (e.g. departments/programs) or the entire membership
- Follow a multi-step process, commencing with the written grievance, a meeting of the FSA and BCIT, a formal response, and then a decision on whether to proceed to arbitration

Union Grievances, as the name suggests, are initiated by the Union. They can be utilized for one or more individual employees, as well as groups (e.g. departments/programs) or the entire membership.



Members have occasionally reported that their managers are critical about the FSA's involvement in disputes. We have also witnessed the opposite situation, with managers welcoming our involvement because they can see that it is effective. **Do not be deterred from getting advice and support from your union.** We are here to assist you with workplace challenges, not to make things more difficult.

Chief Negotiator's Message:

Bargaining: A Substantial Task



Colin Jones
Chief Negotiator

As we have seen in recent rounds of bargaining, the BC Provincial Government's mandate leaves very little room to bargain. Despite BCIT's \$129 million accumulated operating surplus, the NDP government, through their bureaucrats at the Post-Secondary Employers Association (PSEA), have BCIT – like the rest of our sector – on a short leash. The 2019 Sustainable Services Negotiating Mandate includes a meager pay increase of 2% annually over the 3 years of the contract and the “ability to negotiate conditional and modest funding that can be used to drive tangible service improvements for British Columbians.” If BCIT's hands are tied in the compensation department, we must focus on collaborative and creative discussions at the local level, to solve the problems experienced by our members and the BCIT community.

The Federation of Post-Secondary Educators (FPSE) have been lobbying the Province for a year to address the systemic issue of secondary scales – our part-time studies contracts – that permit institutes to pay part-time instructors far, far less than their counterparts in “day school”, while they teach the same courses, to the same students, and undertake the same 2 to 3 or more hours of work for every hour spent in the classroom. While there has been some acknowledgement at the provincial level that there is, indeed, an issue, they have not come forward to commit the necessary funds to address this inequity. It is well past time for this to change.

We are encouraged that BCIT's recently minted Strategic Plan for 2019-2022 sets the stage for meaningful discussion at the bargaining table. We are excited to hear



how BCIT will Achieve Excellence by attracting – and retaining! – both instructors and non-instructional staff with the real-world, industry experience that our students deserve. The FSA offices have heard far too many stories recently about postings going unfilled for long periods of time and members leaving after just 1 or 2 terms. Our students deserve better.

As BCIT gives sharpened attention to matters like employee engagement, we struggle to comprehend proposals that weaken our collegial model for governance at BCIT. Attacks on our right to meaningful consultation will be defended. Just because you, our members, do not agree with the decisions of BCIT management, does not mean you are disengaged from your work, your students, or your community at BCIT. We are as engaged and committed as ever.

We – both your FSA and BCIT's bargaining teams - have a substantial task ahead of us at the bargaining table. We need to find ways to satisfy the needs of our members and the Institute, while meeting the approval of the provincial government. As our wages fall further and further behind inflation, we cannot be expected to accept status quo in other areas. We are bargaining for a fair deal.

Board Profile

Ken Zeleschuk was elected to the FSA board in the spring of 2019. Ken has quickly stepped into the role and was recently approved by the board to be one of the Board-Staff Liaison Officers as well as taking on additional project work being led by the board. Ken's years of experience at BCIT and as an FSA Tech Rep provide him with insight and knowledge that are great contributions to the FSA board.

How long have you worked at BCIT?

“Worked” if this includes the rigorous study students undertake at BCIT, I graduated from the 2-year Diploma in Civil & Structural Engineering decades ago before gaining work experience in the field and returning to my alma mater. Taught in Adult Education-PTS in the late 80's/early 90's and continue to instruct in day school and PTS.

What motivates you to be involved with the FSA?

The value of setting organizational direction and improving peoples and societies conditions for the future.

One way to make meetings better:

Only one? Celebrating milestone achievements.

If you had to choose an occupation other than your current one, what would it be?

Pediatrician

If you had \$1-million to give to a cause, what would you select?

Union Gospel Mission – Downtown Eastside food, shelter and rehab programs for the homeless and impoverished with sterling reputation going back to 1940.

What's your favourite place on the campus you work at?

Natural grounds at south end of campus (anywhere in nature with trees, water, trails, foliage...).

Which living person do you most admire?

Charles Francis Feeney – Philanthropist whose lifetime 6.3B in donations left him with a net worth of 1.5M, a generosity index of 420,000%!

What motivates your work?

The education (and betterment) of people – the passing on of knowledge, experience and influence to the next generation of learners and citizens.

If you could live anywhere, where would it be?

Near Snowdonia National Park, Wales, UK – breathtaking!

Do you have a non-work related passion or hobby? What is it?

Hiking-Mountaineering – Summated Mt Baker in June and Mt Whitney a couple years back. Love the North Shore trails!

The future of public post-secondary education is... well worth defending and preserving for future generations.

What is a course/class you would like to take?

Neuroscience & Neuropharmacology – how chemicals affect the brain and nervous system.

One word to describe the FSA?

Committed.

What is the greatest issue facing BCIT?

The future of education in a modern, challenging landscape.

What makes a workplace healthy?

Trust, mutual respect, commitment and honest engagement (enjoying fun social activities with colleagues doesn't hurt either).

What could you use right now if someone would invent it for you?

A Time Machine Teleporter – moving back to experience History and forward to the Future at will.

What lesson has being on the FSA board taught you?

The importance of collaborative engagement and discussions on important issues facing current and future members.

What is the best book you have read recently?

Do plays count? A Thousand Splendid Suns – intense & engaging drama!

What most inspires you?

Making a positive difference in people's lives, producing change now and into future generations (paying it forward).

What as your first paying job?

Vancouver Sun newspaper carrier in East Vancouver – so many practical, lifelong lessons learned!



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AS AN FSA MEMBER WHO WORKS IN PART-TIMES STUDIES, DO I HAVE SPECIFIC PROTECTIONS IN THE COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT?

Yes! The Collective Agreement establishes your employment rights such as: the rates of pay, benefit eligibility, a grievance process, and (for PTS instructors) the right to normally be rehired. Like all FSA members, PTS/Auxiliary Employees have rights and responsibilities in their respective roles. How these are applied in your specific context can be challenging to outline in specific detail, but PTS/Auxiliary Employees can always obtain more information by contacting the FSA directly.



Staff Profile

Michael Thompson is one of the FSA's new Labour Relations Representatives. Michael comes to the FSA with decades of experience as an advocate for the rights of workers and for better working conditions for all. Michael is a keen and talented rep with a passion for research, history, and social justice. We are thrilled to have Michael join our staff team dedicated to representation, negotiation, and advocacy on behalf of FSA members.

<p>How long have you worked at the FSA? Since August 2019</p>	<p>If you could live anywhere, where would it be? I am living here already, but if I had to choose another it would be Oahu, Hawaii.</p>	<p>If you had \$1-million to give to a cause, what would you select? Lupus Foundation</p>	<p>What's your favourite place on the campus you work at? For now, my desk.</p>
<p>What motivates your work? The desire to obtain positive resolves to workplace issues.</p>	<p>What is the greatest issue facing the labour movement? Erosion of employment security via contracting out and precarious employment relationships.</p>	<p>Do you have a non-work related passion or hobby? What is it? Weight training and cardio workouts to balance my sedentary work environment.</p>	<p>The future of public post-secondary education is... unlimited.</p>
<p>One word to describe the FSA? Unique</p>	<p>What is the best book you have read recently? The Last Lion - Winston Churchill Biography.</p>	<p>What makes a workplace healthy? Good lines of communication between all participants.</p>	<p>What is a course/class you would like to take? I have always enjoyed building things... a course in carpentry/construction would be on my list.</p>
<p>What lesson has working at the FSA taught you? Every workplace has similar challenges facing staff.</p>	<p>What was your first paying job? Age 8 for BCTEL at 3 dollars an hour; my Dad who was a BCTEL Lineman hired me for a day.</p>	<p>What most inspires you? The opportunity to make a positive difference in someone's life through social justice advocacy.</p>	<p>What could you use right now if someone would invent it for you? A good answer for this question.</p>
<p>What motivates you to be involved with the FSA? The opportunity for member advocacy in an academic setting.</p>	<p>One way to make meetings better: Agenda shared well ahead of scheduled meeting time; concise and fair chairing.</p>	<p>If you had to choose an occupation other than your current one, what would it be? Meteorologist, which is markedly different from what I do now, however I have always had a keen interest in weather systems and earth science.</p>	
<p>Which living person do you most admire? Noam Chomsky</p>			

For this feature, the FSA borrows from Marcel Proust (and others who have popularized the French author's questionnaire), as a way for you to get to know our members, board members, and staff.

Contribute to the FSA Voice!

Do you have news or a story that you think other FSA members would be interested in?

Consider contributing to the FSA Voice! Contact us at 604.432.8695 or fsa@bcit.ca

Vision

Outstanding careers through outstanding employment conditions.

Mission

To create an outstanding workplace: engage, celebrate, protect, and make gains for all our members.

Values

- Empowerment
- Influence
- Principled Action
- Social Justice
- Solidarity
- Strength

Contact Us

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We acknowledge that the BCITFSA and its members' workplaces are located on unceded Indigenous land belonging to the Coast Salish peoples, including the territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.



Peter Fenrich
President



Silvia Raschke
Vice-President



Terry Gordon
Treasurer



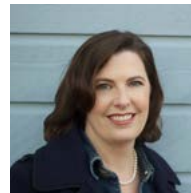
Kevin Cudihee
Director



Karl Hildebrandt
Director



Shannon Kelly
Director



Holly Munn
Director, Associate Members



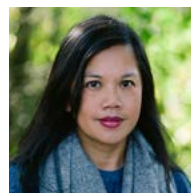
Paul Mills
Director, Associate Members



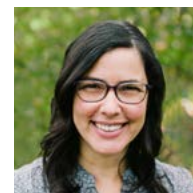
Ken Zeleschuk
Director

THE FSA TEAM

at time of publication



Maria Angerilli
Operations Director /
Interim Co-Executive Director



Kyla Epstein
Member Engagement Officer /
Interim Co-Executive Director



Colin Jones
Chief Negotiator



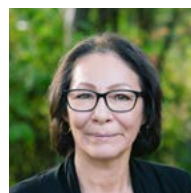
George Talbott
Sr Labour Relations Rep



Kristie Starr
Labour Relations Rep



Michael Thompson
Labour Relations Rep



Debbie Kinequon
Operations Assistant



Pierre Cassidy
Information Officer

