

# BCIT FSA VOICE



## President's Message:

# Negotiations:

## Members and Values at Centre Stage



Teresa Place  
President

As you have heard us say before - our work is all about our members. This is at the heart of how we approach each opportunity to negotiate on behalf of you. Negotiations are a day-to-day activity in our office and you, the member, are always the focus.

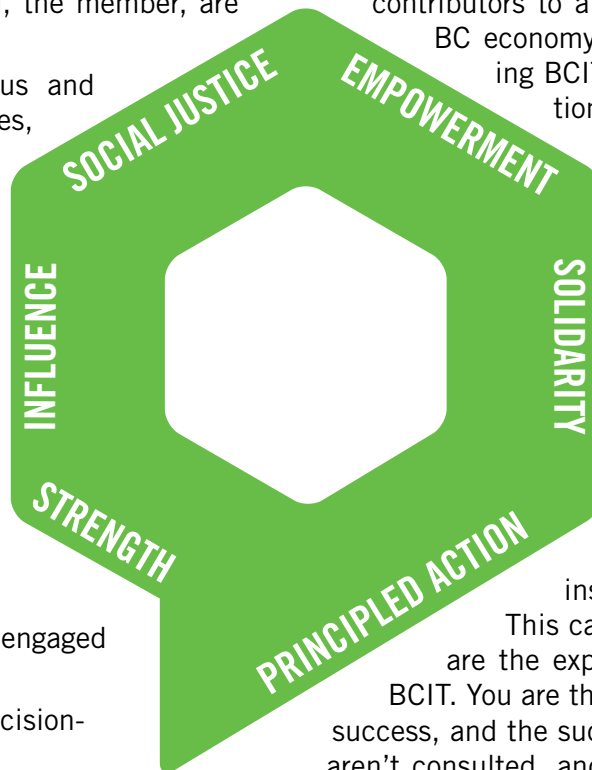
Through that focus and guided by our values, every negotiation we undertake serves our commitment to:

- Foster high standards of excellence in education;
- Improve members' employment conditions, working environment, and opportunities;
- Maintain transparency in FSA activities;
- Foster a well-informed and engaged membership;
- Promote participation in decision-making; and
- Nurture a sense of community amongst our members and all of BCIT.

Whether at the bargaining table or in between rounds of bargaining, negotiation offers the FSA a chance to enter into a dialogue that seeks to balance the needs of members with the external realities facing public post-secondary education in BC.

One of the most difficult things we encounter when negotiating is not getting the right people to sit across from us at the table. Through our government relations strategy, we have positioned the FSA and its members to be seen by provincial decision makers as unique and key contributors to a diversified, modern, and thriving BC economy. We are re-enforcing and updating BCIT's reputation as the go-to institution for applied research and industry support. We are also showing decision makers that our students are key to BC's economy and our members drive the success of our students. These efforts ultimately seek more flexibility from the government for the 2019 round of negotiations.

You support the FSA in this work by being involved with your students, your school, the institute, industry, and our union. This can't be said enough: Our members are the experts in advancing the success of BCIT. You are the key to student success, industry success, and the success of BCIT. If you aren't heard, aren't consulted, and your expertise is being ignored, then we need to know. Through all our negotiations, the FSA strives to ensure that the voices of our members are heard.



***Together we can find the right path forward.  
I know that I can't do that without our  
members and BCIT can't either.***

## Executive Director's Message:

# The Cycle of Negotiations

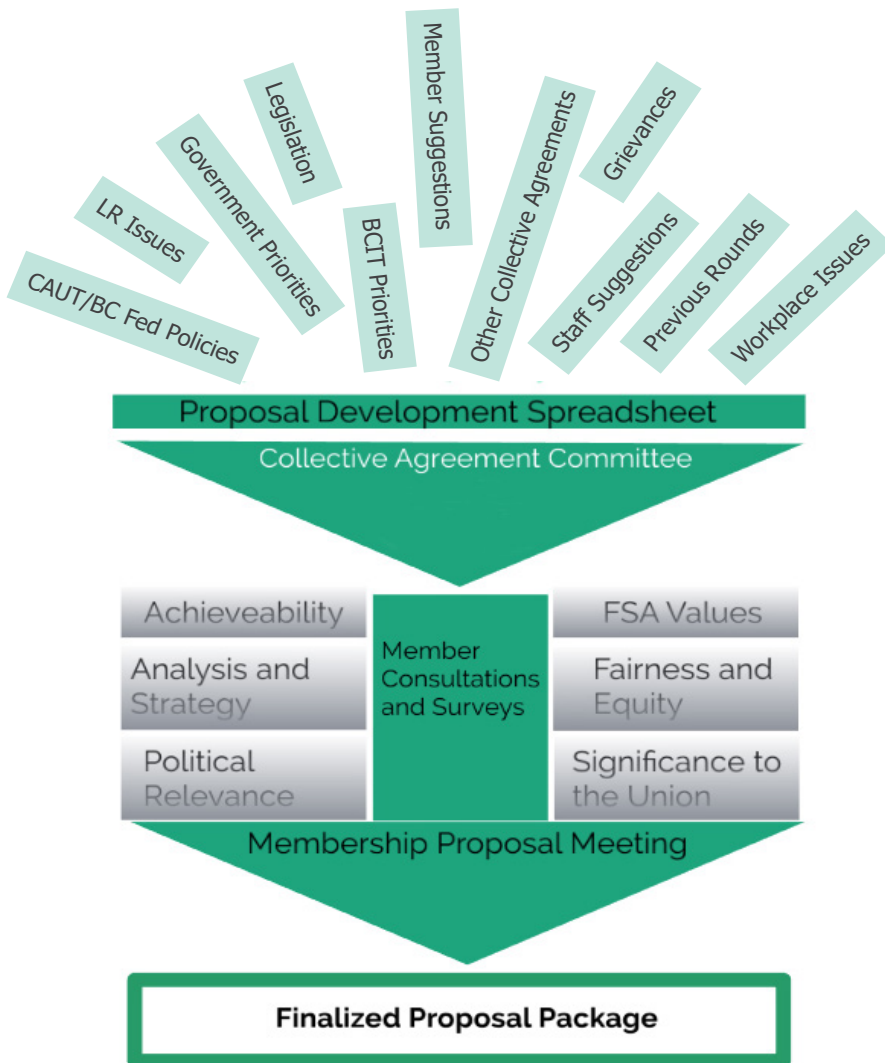


Paul Reniers  
Executive Director

How many times have you heard, or maybe said, 'I only pay attention to the union during bargaining'? It's a common sentiment, and a common problem, in many unionized workplaces. Bargaining has the highest profile of all union activities. With collective agreements usually having a term of two to four years, long periods seem to pass when there is no bargaining to worry about. The reality is that any FSA member could be influencing the next round of bargaining right now.

The collective bargaining cycle never ends. For the FSA collective agreement expiring in 2019, the union's preparations began before members ratified the agreement in 2015. In this case, the FSA Bargaining Team shared the dissatisfaction voiced by members over the lack of progress on PTS and applied research issues in the 2014-15 round of negotiations. The debate around ratifying that agreement began to position the FSA to make significant gains in those areas in 2019.

## FSA BARGAINING HOW PROPOSALS ARE MADE



Bargaining is a cyclical activity. Each round builds on what happened the round before. Ideas about changing the collective agreement that are rejected in one round come back to be considered again. The proposal might be rejigged or completely different approaches to an issue might be attempted based on what happened in the previous round. Each side comes to the table prepared to overcome arguments the other party made in the previous round.

Those changes and entirely new proposals develop from many sources on a continuous basis. The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) hosts a monthly teleconference with negotiators across the country to share ideas and information. Twice a year at CAUT's general councils, member associations discuss and decide upon model clauses for a variety of collective agreement provisions relevant to academic workers.

Within the FSA, bargaining efforts are constantly underway at both the strategic and tactical levels. Strategic approaches empower the union to address whatever might arise in bargaining. Our decision to join CAUT and the BC Federation of Labour, our government relations work, our strike fund contributions, our member engagement work, our strategic planning process, all of these major activities build our strength and our ability to fend off concessions and make gains for members.

On a tactical level, collecting data and ideas to drive bargaining in 2019 also began during the previous round. As FSA members and staff identify issues with the collective agreement and ideas for improving our terms and conditions of work, FSA staff log them for consideration by our Collective Agreement Committee. The FSA's labour relations team generates much of this information through their efforts to address member and union issues and through their professional understanding of how collective agreements are applied and interpreted. Grievances are particularly important sources of information for bargaining as they represent areas of dispute over the meaning of the collective agreement and provide for detailed investigation of the issues informing the dispute. Several collective agreement clauses originated from grievances that helped the parties see how the collective agreement was not meeting the needs of the workplace.

While FSA staff gather that information, they also keep an eye on our external environment for new ways to make gains for members. Changes in legislation, government priorities, and changes in BCIT's priorities sometimes open up opportunities for improvements in the collective agreement that weren't previously viable or even apparent. Going into negotiations, the Bargaining Team needs to understand where the employer can and cannot be made to move and what will motivate them to agree to change on certain issues.

No final package of proposals or single round of bargaining can solve everyone's problems. And no round of bargaining can provide every improvement the FSA is fighting for on behalf of our members. With each cycle we make gains and with each cycle we work to ensure that your voices are heard. All of this couldn't take place without the contributions of staff, members, and our greater community. We truly are stronger together.

## MEMBERS WANTING A BETTER COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT CAN TAKE ACTION AT ANY TIME:

- Email your proposal idea to [fsa@bcit.ca](mailto:fsa@bcit.ca) and it will be submitted for consideration by the FSA Collective Agreement Committee
- If you have a good example demonstrating a workplace problem that might be solved in collective bargaining, submit that as well
- Use the [fsa@bcit.ca](mailto:fsa@bcit.ca) address to let us know if you think the collective agreement is not being enforced: addressing these cases can result in improvements to the contract
- Come to FSA meetings and events and volunteer as a Tech Rep or join a committee: your involvement in these ways strengthens the union and gives us more chance to learn about your issues and your perspective
- Follow our newsletters, blog, and social media to understand how issues that will impact bargaining are unfolding

## Negotiating a Collective Win from an Individual Loss

*George Talbott, Labour Relations Representative*

**Imagine losing your pension because of something you did on your first day of work.**

This was the issue brought to the FSA in 2016 by one of our PTS instructors. Many years ago, the member was invited to guest lecture and signed a pension waiver offered by BCIT. The waiver meant more money in his pocket for the two-hour presentation; he had no plans to do more work for BCIT at that time. The waiver then languished on file, forgotten but continuing to exert a legal effect. Later, joining the Institute as a PTS instructor, he regularly received contracts for instruction over sixteen years. The waiver was never noted in any subsequent contracts. Nearing retirement, he discovered he was not eligible for a pension because of the waiver he had signed years before as a guest lecturer.

He wanted to know if there was anything the FSA could do. His waiver was legally unassailable. But, what about other PTS instructors in this situation, asked the member – what can we do to ensure this does not happen again?

The FSA filed a grievance on behalf of the member. Though ultimately the grievance could not eliminate the effect of the waiver, it laid the groundwork for a successful negotiation with the employer that should ameliorate this problem for future unsuspecting PTS instructors, and other members, who do not remember or realize that they have waived their right to a pension. The commitments obtained from BCIT will provide an opportunity to members who have forgotten they signed away this important right to cancel any waiver on file, sign up for the pension, and contribute to it going forwards.

Negotiation is not simply a process that takes place at the collective bargaining table every few years. Negotiations happen in all aspects of our lives, whether we're bargaining a price for a car, or trading off domestic chores with a partner. A negotiation is an attempt to resolve a dispute, each side attempting to satisfy its own interests, while attempting to meet the interests of the other. Much theoretical work has been done by academics and practitioners in the area of negotiations: for instance, have a look at Harvard's Negotiation Program website.



# WHO IS AFFECTED BY A PENSION WAIVER?

Because the College Pension Plan requires individuals who earn above a defined level of income to be mandatorily enrolled in the pension, and stay enrolled, only those FSA members who are offered contracts on a limited basis are likely to have been affected by a pension waiver. The large majority of those affected will likely be PTS instructors, who are offered a limited number of contracts on a repeat basis, and who have signed a waiver and forgotten about it. It is also possible for temporary or part-time employees with a relatively light workload to have signed a waiver and forgotten about it.

Negotiations fail when there is no incentive to bargain - where not negotiating appears preferable to trying to reach a settlement. In this pension waiver case, the Institute and the FSA had a mutual interest in resolving the grievance. Some of this was encouraged simply because the waiver had a painful and disproportionate effect on the member.

As a result of the FSA's negotiations with BCIT, the FSA has obtained an agreement that includes, among other items, the following:

- Several documentary sources of retirement information on BCIT's website will be altered to ensure members who have signed pension waivers are alerted to that fact and may then choose to cancel those waivers and elect to enroll in a pension plan;
- The FSA may regularly request the list of members who have signed pension waivers; and,
- BCIT will, at the FSA's request, communicate with those members to inform them of their ability to cancel a waiver, and enroll in a pension plan.

## LESSON:

A morally weighty claim can sometimes be a useful form of negotiating strategy, even where a legal claim may not be sufficient.

If you have any concerns about the status of your pension, please contact the FSA.



## Influence at the Provincial Level

*Kenzie Woodbridge, FSA Vice-President*

It's been just over a year since the BCITFSA joined the BC Federation of Labour on a trial basis. Joining the BC Fed has given us opportunities to connect with other unions across the province, including other faculty associations, to have an impact on provincial politics and government policy, and to access in-depth information about what is going on in the province in terms of bargaining, political strategy, and labour activism.

One way in which we are connecting with others is through participation in the BC Fed's various committees. I have been appointed to be the FSA's representative on the BC Fed Executive Council, which means I get to attend quarterly meetings with union leadership and have a vote on a variety of issues and policies at the Fed. The FSA also has 11 people appointed to the BC Fed's standing committees:

<b>Community &amp; Social Action</b>	Bhaveena Goradia
<b>Constitution &amp; Structure</b>	Teresa Place and Paul Reniers
<b>Education</b>	Nathan Devos and Paul Reniers
<b>Human Rights</b>	Tara Wilkie
<b>Occupational Health &amp; Safety</b>	Jennifer Cheng and Bobby Sidhu
<b>Political Action</b>	Tessa Jordan and Kyla Epstein
<b>Women's Rights</b>	Tessa Jordan and Frances McLafferty
<b>Young Worker's</b>	Rory Dougall

We still need one more appointee for the Young Worker's, Community & Social Action, and Human Rights Committees. If you're interested in getting involved and have an interest in those issues, please let the FSA know.

With the recent change in government, there has also been a significant change in the relationship that the BC Fed has with the provincial government and a significant increase in its ability to influence BC political agendas and appointments. As one example, the current provincial government actively sought names from the BC Fed for appointments to the Boards of Governors of universities, colleges, and institutes all over the province. Because we are a member of the BC Fed, we were able to nominate people that we knew would have BCIT's best interests and the best interests of its students and faculty at heart. At least one of those people was recently appointed to BCIT's Board of Governors and we would have no clear path for influencing this without the Fed.

In stark contrast to previous governments, the new provincial government has been reaching out to the BC Fed almost daily since taking office, seeking input and information. This access and influence to government is important and it has proven to be good for us to have a seat at the table of the organization that has it. Through our connection with the BC Fed, we learn about the content of meetings between government and the largest provincial unions about the next round of public sector bargaining starting in 2019. This information will help us to shape our own bargaining strategy, and coordination with other public sector unions is a topic of discussion at the Fed.

So far, there have been significant benefits for us stemming from our involvement with the Fed. We expect these benefits will continue in 2018 as we learn more about how the Fed works, develop our networks, and get closer to negotiations.

# AFFILIATION UPDATE

## BOARD MEMBER PROFILE: Terry Gordon



*Terry Gordon is a great example of what's best about the FSA. He uses his professional expertise as an auditor to give back to his colleagues as the FSA Treasurer. The FSA has provided him with a platform for sharing his expertise with BCIT management through many labour-management discussions about budgets. He has also been a willing and effective link between his colleagues and FSA staff on labour relations matters.*

**Why is it important for the FSA to be a strong advocate for members?** I know that some of our members take the FSA for granted and I understand that many FSA members believe they will never directly need the services of the FSA. However, it is important for all of our members to know that if there is a problem in their workplace, the FSA is there for them. Our very experienced labour relations staff have a strong track record of advocating for members and getting results.

**What motivates you to be involved with the FSA as a board member?** I enjoy the strong camaraderie of the FSA staff and fellow board members. I consider it a privilege to be part of such a well-functioning team!

**What is something you have learned since joining the FSA board?** The main thing that I have learned is how diverse the BCIT community is. My involvement with the FSA forced me out of my School of Business bubble and exposed me to issues and practices in other schools and departments. BCIT is an incredibly complex and diverse organization and I am convinced that the strength and success of BCIT comes from this diversity.

**How does the FSA support your work at BCIT?** It is great to know that the FSA has my back regarding my workplace rights and conditions. I can focus on my students without worrying about having to advocate for myself for those things. This is certainly the best job that I have ever had and I like to think that working in a unionized environment has a lot to do with that.

**What are you reading right now?** I have two novels on the go right now: "A Boy in Winter" by Rachel Seiffert and "The Lost Ones" by Sheena Kamal who moderated the panel discussion at the last FSA general meeting.

BCIT FSA

To search type and hit enter...

Member Portal  
Sign-in →

Home | Who We Are | Employment Agreements | Get Involved | News | Information for Members | Contact | Calendar

Representation. Negotiation. Advocacy.  
Supporting members since 1964.

Getting Serious about Deep Disputes | Fair Employment Week | What are your rights?



**SAVE THE DATE!**



**Our next big  
Diversity Circles event  
is on March 23rd -  
more details to follow on  
[diversitycircles.com](http://diversitycircles.com)**



Based on feedback we have been collecting from members, we have restructured the menu options on our website.

We hope this helps you find what you are looking for!

We are always open to hearing how the website can better support you.

[bcitfsa.ca](http://bcitfsa.ca)

**FSA WEBSITE WAYFINDING**

## MEMBER PROFILE: Cath-Anne Ambrose



*Cath-Anne Ambrose has stepped into the BCIT community with all of her intelligence, energy, and enthusiasm. As a Tech Rep and a regular participant in FSA meetings, Cath-Anne's commitment to post-secondary education is evident. The FSA is a member-driven organization and Cath-Anne exemplifies how member involvement makes our organization great!*

**How long have you been at BCIT?** I have been at BCIT for 4 great years. With my industry background in communication and my prior teaching experience in media relations, it became a perfect fit. There was a posting for a communications faculty position that would teach into Broadcast-Journalism – and it all felt right from the start.

**What motivates your work?** The students. I see the role of an instructor as also being a mentor and helping guide their lives, careers and aspirations. Having strong communication skills is critical across all disciplines and it is often the number one skill employers seek when hiring new grads. My goal is to always help them move on with ways to make an immediate impact – not to just continue to learn but to move their career and the company they represent forward.

**What lesson(s) has working at BCIT taught you?** The most important lesson is that there is no “one-size-fits all” approach to teaching. There are so many varying degrees of education in the classroom, that it is critical to understand and approach each student in a unique and insightful manner. We are all distinctive.

**What would make your work even better?** While we all work hard to contribute, a deeper and continued collaboration across the wider BCIT community including all types of educators, senior executives and the FSA is critical. Shared knowledge is the best for students.

**How does the FSA support your work at BCIT?** Support is first and foremost. FSA encouragement allows us to focus on what's most important – concentrating on students, the learning process and – ultimately – sending them into a workplace environment with a “ready to start” attitude. The FSA represents us in so many situations that take pressure off our day-to-day concerns – and knowing all the background work is managed.

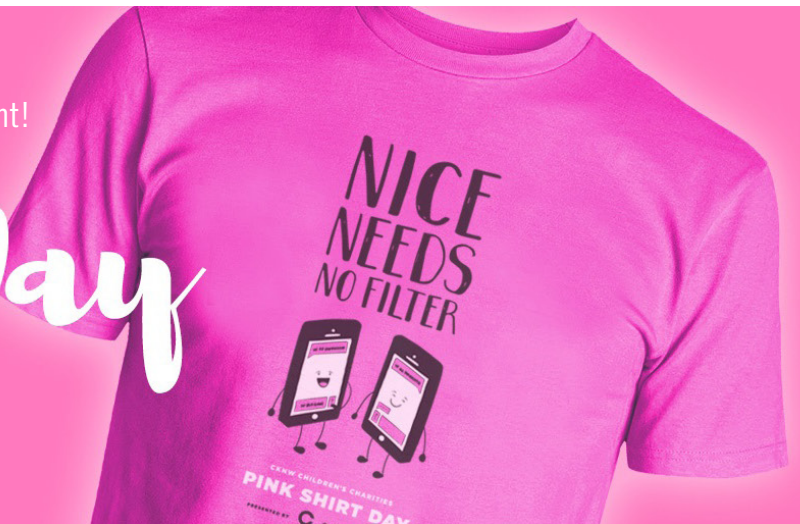
**What motivates you to be involved with the FSA?** I have worked in multi-unionized environments in the film & television industry and had seen first-hand the important role of unions in advocating on behalf of workers. The FSA is a great way to get out and meet other instructors across the institute. Being a Tech Rep allows me to relay the importance of the FSA and what it means to instructors.

**What are you reading right now?** Kicking & Dreaming: A Story of Heart, Soul, and Rock and Roll. Being women in rock & roll is difficult to say the least – Ann and Nancy Wilson have done it for more than 30 years – and it's a major reason why it's also inspiring for us all. The fact that they are leads – guitar and singer – set the tone for song and change in the way we think about music and women.

The FSA is proud to join with the BCIT community to stand up against discrimination, bullying, and harassment!

# Pink Shirt Day

FEBRUARY 28, 2018



# 2018 FSA ELECTIONS

## FSA President & Vice-President

### Wednesday, February 7 (noon)

- Formal call for nominations

### Friday, February 23 (noon)

- Nominations close
- Deadline: candidate statement submissions

### Wednesday, February 28

- Candidate names released to membership
- Candidate statements posted to website

### Wednesday, March 7

- All Candidates Meeting

### Friday, March 9 (noon)

- Electronic voting turns on

### Tuesday, April 10 (noon)

- Election results to membership

### Election Eligibility

- Be a member in good standing,
- Be nominated in writing by a Regular or Associate Member,
- Consent to the nomination, and
- Not be disqualified from being a director of a company under Section 124 of the Business Corporations Act.

Who can vote? All current FSA members!

We are pleased to announce that our Returning Officer for 2018 is William Oching.

*Schedule subject to Board and Returning Officer's approval  
Check [bcitfsa.ca](http://bcitfsa.ca) for final approved schedule*



# 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 Kyla at 604.432.8569 or [kepstein@bcit.ca](mailto:kepstein@bcit.ca)

## Upcoming Events

**Feb 14** Tech Rep Meeting  
2:30pm-4:30pm

**Feb 21** Board of Directors Meeting  
4:00-8:00pm  
SE16-114

**Feb 28** Pink Shirt Day - Photo Op  
12:00pm

**Mar 3** Board of Directors Meeting  
9:00am-4:00pm  
TBD

*find out more on [bcitfsa.ca/calendar](http://bcitfsa.ca/calendar)*

## Contact Us

**BCIT FACULTY & STAFF ASSOCIATION**  
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[twitter.com/BCITFSA](https://twitter.com/BCITFSA)



search 'BCITFSA Group'



[loop.bcit.ca/groups/BCIT-FSA](http://loop.bcit.ca/groups/BCIT-FSA)  
BCIT internal only

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, Tsleil-Waututh, and Squamish Nations.

## the FSA Team



Teresa Place  
President



Kenzie Woodbridge  
Vice-President



Terry Gordon  
Treasurer



Karl Hildebrandt  
Director



Zaa Joseph  
Director



Shannon Kelly  
Director



Nancy Knaggs  
Director



Paul Mills  
Director, Associate Members



Silvia Raschke  
Director



Ted Rutledge  
Director, Associate Members



Paul Reniers  
Executive Director



Heather Neun  
(On Leave)



Christie Nagy  
Labour Relations Rep



Tess Rebbitt  
(On Leave)



George Talbott  
Labour Relations Rep



Sascha Swartz  
LR Information Officer



Kyla Epstein  
Member Engagement Officer



Maria Angerilli  
Executive Assistant



Debbie Kinequon  
Operations Assistant