

Annual Report 2010-2011

BCIT
FSA

British Columbia Institute of Technology
Faculty & Staff Association

bcitfsa.ca

Mission Statement

The Faculty and Staff Association defends and advances the employment interests of its members through representation, collective bargaining and advocacy with BCIT, the government and the community. We are committed to:

- Fostering high standards of excellence in education;
- Improving members' employment conditions, working environment and opportunities;
- Maintaining transparency in FSA activities;
- Fostering a well-informed and engaged membership; and
- Promoting participation in decision-making, team-building, and nurturing a sense of community amongst its members and all of BCIT.

Contact Us



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Paul Reniers, Executive Director
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Heather Neun , Senior Labour Relations Representative
Christine Nagy, Labour Relations Representative
Tess Rebbitt, Labour Relations Representative
Sascha Swartz, Labour Relations Administrative Analyst

Eileen Chaban, Financial Administrator
Marian Ciccone, Office Assistant
Paul Dayson, Communications Officer

Message from Your President and Executive Director

Thinking Forward. Planning Ahead.

Planning was the major theme for the FSA Board of Directors and staff this past year. Through strategic and operational planning, we believe we have positioned the FSA for success in bargaining and representation for years to come.

Bargaining has been ongoing over the last year as we struggle to meet our members' needs under a provincial mandate that offers nothing. In an effort to create some movement, we gave notice of our intention to withdraw from 32 Memoranda of Agreement (MemAgs). Our notice to withdraw from the MemAgs resulted in deliberation and changes to how and when we use MemAgs. As a result we have developed new practices for negotiating MemAgs and settling grievances that we believe will better serve our members. Our use of MemAgs has been cut in half and the employer has agreed to unconditionally acknowledge violations of the Collective Agreement for the first time in years.

Bargaining has also turned into a process of positioning ourselves for the future. Without the engagement from the employer that we were hoping for on the MemAg issue, bargaining slowed dramatically and the hope for compensation increases badly needed by our members has diminished. Still, we continue to bargain for gains in areas of long term interest to our members, including resolving inequities in Part-Time Studies auxiliary employment, adequately recognizing research work done by members, providing maternity leave top-up, and other issues.

The Board of Directors saw some significant changes this year that have contributed to the development of a new strategic direction for the FSA. With the expiration of our previous strategic plan, the former Board established a consultative strategic planning process and engaged a consultant. Three members of that Board stepped aside at the end of their terms and the resulting election produced a few firsts. We had our first competitive election for Director in almost ten years with two more candidates than vacant positions. We also had our first Director—Associate Members (PTS Instructors) nominated in about the same period of time. For the first time in more than five years, the FSA President will move from full-time to half-time release with five other directors taking up release time responsibilities.

The new directors have continued the strategic planning process, adopting a strategic direction that includes increasing engagement with members. This change can already be seen with an increased focus on input from Tech Reps at monthly meetings and with more directors attending department meetings.

Operationally, the FSA office has also taken steps to prepare for the future. We have shifted one budgeted FTE away from executive release time in favour of a staff position dedicated to executive operations. The new position will relieve the administrative burden of maintaining records, preparing documents, and meeting legal requirements from the Directors and Executive Director and allow them to focus time on consultation, policy





matters, and decision making. This change will better ensure our obligations are met while focusing elected members on matters that most need their attention.

The retirement of our longest serving employee, Financial Administrator Eileen Chaban, created an opportunity to consider where our staff resources are best positioned for the future. Eileen and past Boards have done an outstanding job of ensuring the FSA's financial stability for the past 15 years. With financial matters running very smoothly, we have chosen to realign our staff resources to provide more support to labour relations operations. We have created a new position responsible for labour relations information management. Our representatives in recent years have taken great steps towards improving our ability to document and monitor bargaining unit information. Several identified but unfulfilled projects continue to highlight the information gap between the union and the employer. The new position will help us close that gap further by being focused full-time on gathering, organizing, and reporting bargaining unit and grievance information.

Undoubtedly, 2010-2011 has been a time of planned change for the FSA. We are pleased to have accomplished these changes while maintaining a cohesive Board and building support from the membership. The real success of these endeavours will be seen in the coming years.

*Amy Fell
Paul Reniers*

Message from

Your Labour Relations Representatives

Although the FSA staff's focus shifted somewhat in 2011 from addressing the layoffs that began in 2010, the FSA reps continued to address issues arising from the large number of laid-off members with recall rights.

FSA reps undertook several categories of advocacy, ranging from individual concerns of a fairly routine nature to more complex matters of a more global or policy nature. What follows is a summary of these themes.

Individual Rights to Compensation and Benefits: Ensuring Compliance with the Collective Agreement

A significant percentage of files were directed to ensuring that members were paid their due compensation and benefits. The reps worked to redress basic errors as well as BCIT policies or practices that deprived members of such compensation as salary at the appropriate step (due to placement at the wrong step or misclassification) and non-payment or underpayment of administrative allowances and qualification differentials. The FSA reps also dealt with issues involving pension plan enrollment, the proper and timely payment of long-term disability benefits and other extended health benefits.

Policy-Level Advocacy

The reps intervened at a more global level, working with other BCIT stakeholders to improve policies and practices in areas such as problematic student conduct; increasing awareness of members' right to privacy of medical information; as well as respect for human rights and the promotion of a diverse and tolerant work place.

Security of Employment

Under this umbrella, the FSA reps advocated to ensure that members were not subject to improper discipline or unfair disciplinary processes. Other subject matter included protecting seniority and enforcing strict compliance with the vital Article 18 protections that arise in the event of layoffs. To this end, the reps participated in selection committees and worked to rectify several lapses in compliance with the rights of members with recall rights.

Protecting Bargaining Unit Work and Regularization Guarantees

Reps addressed with the protection against improper contracting out of bargaining unit work, including the protection against work being improperly performed by managers. A further and important theme was enforcing the proper use of auxiliary contracts; ensuring that regular work was not improperly characterized as temporary work; and enforcing the significant regularization provisions of the Collective Agreement so that employees became regularized when entitled.

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Working Conditions

The reps' advocacy covered a range of matters involving working conditions: everything from members' physical environment to the enforcement of hours of work and proper work-loading, as well as protections for members' psychological health and well-being. There was particular emphasis on advocating for members who experienced the type of unfair or disrespectful processes and work environments that can undermine a member's psychological health and well-being.

Departmental Processes and other Significant Member Rights

Another major theme was ensuring proper representation and involvement by members on selection committees and consultation with members pursuant to the Collective Agreement. The reps also advocated for members concerning the right to academic freedom, which involves protecting members against improper encroachment on instructors' right to present course materials in accordance with their discretion as well as protection for their intellectual property, particularly course materials.

Between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011, we can report the following:

- 127 issue/grievance files were opened
- 62 files were resolved
- ongoing attendance to daily visits, emails & phone inquiries by members
- attendance as union observers at certain selection committee meetings to ensure compliance with member rights
- 108 contracting-out requests reviewed for the FSA bargaining unit
- 24 student employee requests reviewed
- 25 "memoranda of agreement" (MemAgs) were negotiated with BCIT

Noteworthy accomplishments included the Institute's allowance of several grievances, including a human rights complaint, the latter of which led to human rights training for several segments of the Institute.

*Heather Neun
Christine Nagy
Tess Rebbitt*

The 2011-2014 FSA Strategic Plan

Changing ourselves to better work for you

FSA members can expect to see some changes to their organization over the next few years. Since January, we have been working on the development of a new strategic plan for the Association – hiring a consultant to guide us and holding focus group sessions with members, Tech Reps, the Executive and staff. With the overall plan now adopted by the executive, we are now in the process of developing an implementation plan.

With the new plan the FSA will focus its efforts on three strategic priorities: bargaining and labour relations, member engagement and the management of the Association. Some of the outcomes of these efforts might not be obvious to most members – impacting the way our staff structure their time, organize their work and additional resources being made available for that work. Others will become readily apparent, such as an increased focus on communications – both internal and external – as the FSA reaches out to its membership, the BCIT community, and externally. Likewise, members will see an increased focus on the education and involvement of members.

Through these changes we hope that as an organization we will be able to be better representatives, negotiators and advocates for members and improve their working life here at BCIT.

Working for you in Bargaining and Labour Relations

Changes to bargaining and labour relations will be geared to better protecting and advancing the collective interests of our members. We will be increasingly questioning our methods and systems for collective bargaining and seeking increased feedback from our members about their best interests, working environment and perceptions of the post-secondary employment landscape.

For labour relations representation and advocacy, we will continue to pursue strategies that result in the best outcome for members individually and collectively. To better support this, we will be increasing our investment in the development and maintenance of effective tools for tracking, storing and accessing relevant information about our bargaining unit's labour relations, as well as for tracking current events in the labour relations field outside BCIT.

Tools we expect to implement include surveys of our membership, both while they are employed by BCIT and as they leave the institute, and improved databases to better track members and their issue. With these tools, we expect that we will be able to improve our labour relations techniques and achieve the best outcomes for both individual members and our collective interests.

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Engaging you as members

Expect to see an increase in materials, emails and website activity, as our efforts towards engaging members with the business of the Association will focus on increased communication and education for members as well as for those in specific roles, such as Tech Reps.

The FSA envisions itself as a member-based organization, where volunteers from the membership play an integral role in the direction and management of the Association, and we strive to have open, effective communication at all levels. In order to realize this we will be increasingly utilizing the FSA's new website to deliver a wide range of resource materials and information to members, including:

- the delivery of news to members
- forum discussions
- resource guides on topics of interest to members such as
 - regularization
 - professional development
 - workload
 - placement and advancement
 - the variety of leaves covered under the collective agreement
 - pensions, retirement and working past age 65
 - grievance procedure
 - sick time and long term disability
 - academic freedom and intellectual property
- FSA documents such as minutes, financial documents, annual reports and newsletters, as well as planning documents

This online communication will be led by increasing face-to-face communications as FSA directors reach out to engage with members as groups and individuals at department and school levels, and through an initiative aimed at a revitalized conversation at our monthly tech rep meetings.

We will be striving to let every member know about their membership in the FSA and the benefits to them of their involvement. To do this we will be creating a series of orientation packages for new members, as well as for members in specific roles such as our tech reps, committee members and the directors on our board.

We will seek regular feedback to ensure the work we are doing is in the interests of the membership, and let members know that their involvement is critical to the success of the FSA and the fulfillment of our commitments to them. This said, we will continue to maintain a governance board model and retain clear distinctions between the roles of the board and the staff.

Managing your Association

We have already begun a review of the Association’s bylaws and policies to ensure they meet our obligations as a society and a union. The FSA Board of Directors has over the last year been working to bring our policies up to date and, through this and the strategic planning processes, identified a number of significant issues with the Association’s current bylaws. For example, there are provisions in the bylaws that are counter to the Society Act and also sections which are confusing and unclear. Rather than continue working with bylaws that have these issues, the Board decided to take on the task of updating our bylaws.

These changes will not produce radical changes to the FSA and are not part of any particular agenda for re-making the FSA. Rather, they are intended to make sure that the FSA has the right bylaws to meet the needs and potential challenges of the next several years and to comply with current legislation. We hope to present a new set of bylaws to the members at the end of January.

The Strategic Plan will also inform our operational, communications and human resources planning for the coming years. We’ve committed to having the mix and range of professional staff in place in order to protect and advance the interests of our members, and to implement and maintain a business continuity plan to allow us to provide our services without interruption to our members. To support this, the FSA will be engaging in more frequent and constructive communication between the executive and the staff, and will provide a satisfying work environment to retain and select employees who best meet our needs.

At all times, the FSA will continue to strive to manage our relationship with BCIT so as to best enable the effective assertion of our members’ collective and individual rights.



2010-11

Highlights of Your Association's Activities

Bargaining

Bargaining with BCIT has proceeded slowly during the past year. Some of the issues raised have been engaged with cooperatively by both sides, while other discussions have been very adversarial. The employer's decision to arbitrate our withdrawal from Memoranda of Agreements (MemAgs) has led to significant delay and with nothing being offered at the table, there is no point in our rushing into an agreement. We remain committed to bringing members an improved agreement that warrants their support.



New Website Launch

The FSA's January General Meeting saw the launch of the FSA's new website. We enhanced our navigation to make it easier for you to find what you're looking for – quickly and easily – and added new features and functions to our site to make it easier for you to:

- find documents – such as member guides, minutes and bargaining documents – in our new document libraries;
- share your thoughts on FSA-related issues with other members in our forums; or
- stay informed by subscribing to our RSS feed.

FSA Director Elections

This year the FSA membership has elected a full slate of seven Directors-at-Large and a Director – Associate Members, representing Part-Time Studies instructors, to the FSA board. Voting numbers were up over 10 percent, including the participation of a significant number of our PTS members.

Tech Rep Meetings: member involvement and feedback

Monthly meetings of the FSA's Tech Reps continued to be a useful conduit for members' feedback and concerns on BCIT-wide issues and a venue for cross-department discussion of members' needs. Guest speakers also contributed to an increased focus at meetings on the continuing education of Tech Reps for their role. The FSA now intends to expand on this success and further improve communications through our Tech Reps, as well as directly with members.

CUPE-FSA Bargaining

Before year-end, the FSA began bargaining with its staff, represented by Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) local 1004. More sessions are scheduled for November.



FSA Finances 2010-2011

The FSA finished the 2010-11 fiscal year in a very strong financial position with net assets (assets in excess of liabilities) of \$2.01 million at June 30, 2011. During the year, the FSA experienced a 2.1% decline in membership dues revenue, due primarily to a drop in BCIT’s part-time studies activity and the corresponding reduction in wages paid to our part-time studies members. Investment income rebounded 225% over the previous year due to better management of our short-term investments. Despite the increase over last year, investment income was 73.5% below what it was five years ago, due to continued low market interest rates.

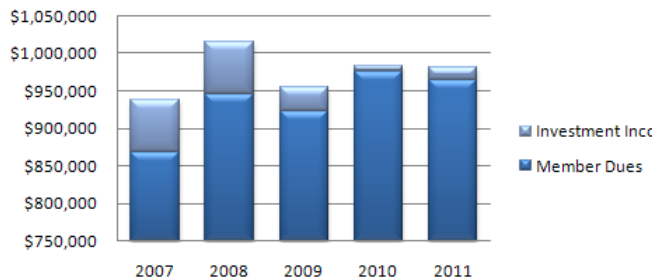
The FSA reported its sixth consecutive annual operating surplus and was able to increase its strike fund by over \$138 thousand, surpassing its previous strike fund target of \$1.5 million.

Other financial highlights for 2010-11:

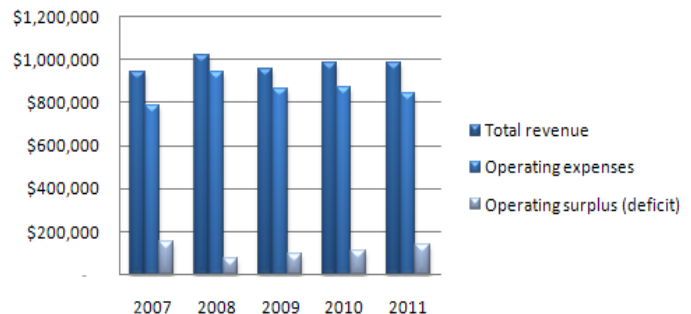
- Maintained a membership dues rate of 1.35% of gross wages for the sixth consecutive year. This rate continues to be the lowest in the sector.
- Operating expenses were 4.1% lower than in the previous year, due mainly to lower salary and benefits costs resulting from vacant staff positions and under utilized release time for Directors.
- Strike fund balance at June 30, 2011: \$1.601 million.

	Member Dues	Investment Income	Total revenue	Operating expenses	Operating surplus
2007	\$868,637	\$68,534	\$937,171	\$786,711	\$150,460
2008	\$945,640	\$69,936	\$1,015,576	\$938,087	\$77,489
2009	\$922,078	\$33,120	\$955,198	\$860,275	\$94,923
2010	\$974,577	\$8,085	\$982,662	\$870,447	\$112,215
2011	\$963,730	\$18,192	\$981,922	\$843,685	\$138,264

Total Revenue
Years Ended June 30

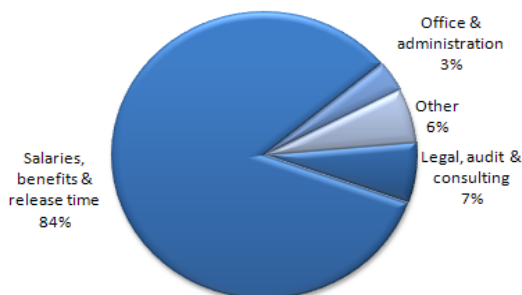


Operating Results
Years Ended June 30



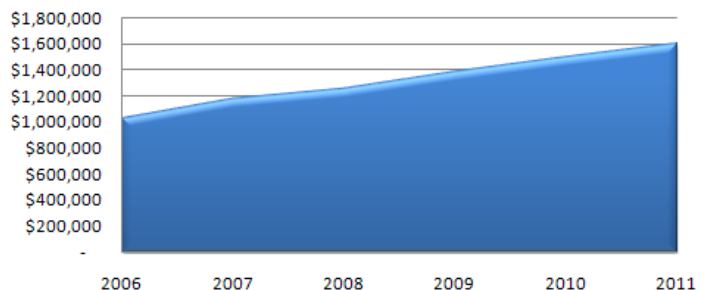
Operating Expenses
Year Ended June 30, 2010

Legal, audit & consulting	\$57,431
Salaries, benefits & release time	\$705,137
Office & administration	\$28,971
Other	\$52,119
Total	\$843,658



Strike Fund
At June 30

2006	\$1,029,464
2007	\$1,179,924
2008	\$1,257,413
2009	\$1,386,089
2010	\$1,498,304
2011	\$1,601,489





The FSA Board of Directors

Current (2011--2012)

Amy Fell, President
Terry Gordon, Vice-President
Teresa Place, Treasurer
Alistair Calder, Director-at-Large
Steve Finn, Director-at-Large
Joe Newton, Director-at-Large
Taco Niet, Director-at-Large
Silvia Raschke, Director-at-Large
James (Ted) Rutledge, Director Associate Members
Kathryn Stewart, Director-at-Large

Past (2010-2011)

Amy Fell, President
Terry Gordon, Vice-President
Teresa Place, Treasurer
Joe Boyd, Director-at-Large
Neil Cox, Director-at-Large
Steve Finn, Director-at-Large
Colin Jones, Director-at-Large
Taco Niet, Director-at-Large
Silvia Raschke, Director-at-Large

Representation. Negotiation. Advocacy.

