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The BCITFSA and its members' workplaces are located on unceded Indigenous land belonging to the Coast Salish peoples, including the territories of the x̣ʷməθkʷəỵəm (Musqueam), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.



Colin Jones
PRESIDENT & CHIEF NEGOTIATOR
BCITFSA



Our Board has seen the benefits of walking in solidarity with our post-secondary colleagues.



AN INSURANCE POLICY FOR WHEN WE GO ON STRIKE: JOINING THE CAUT DEFENCE FUND

Earlier this year, our FSA Board of Directors voted to join the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) Defence Fund. The Fund provides financial assistance to Canadian academic member staff unions dealing with strikes or lockouts. The Fund currently includes 66 member unions representing over 37,000 academic staff from St. John's to Victoria. Having been affiliated with CAUT for almost a decade, our Board has seen the benefits of walking in solidarity with our post-secondary colleagues from across Canada. Now, having joined the Fund, the phrase “walking in solidarity” becomes even more real.

I've crudely described the Fund as “an insurance policy for when we go on strike,” but it's much more than that. Sure, they will provide the FSA \$96 per day based on the number of dues-paying members after our third day of striking. And, yes, they provide strike mediation and arbitration benefits to cover the associated fees and an interest free loan of \$200,000 for each week of a strike. Of course, adding the Fund's \$36+ million (and growing!) bankroll to ours means we can't be pushed around during job action. But, in my mind, the biggest benefit of joining the Fund is solidarity. The first Friday we're on strike, Fund members from across the country will join our picket line as flying pickets. As Fund President Michael Shaw says, “we're there to pump the tires of the picketers.” Picketing can feel awfully lonely, but knowing we have nation-wide support and our siblings in post-secondary walking the line beside us is why I advocated for the FSA to join. And, we get to reciprocate. I've spent three Fridays on picket lines outside of University of Manitoba and McGill and, particularly in frigid temperatures, it felt great to bring smiles and warmth from the West Coast.

And thanks to the judicious financial stewardship of our current and previous FSA Boards of Directors, we are able to join the CAUT Fund without a dues increase. That makes me proud and excited, particularly while I serve as our Chief Negotiator heading into our 20th round of bargaining with BCIT next year.

In solidarity,



PATTERN RECOGNITION: THINKING ABOUT THE BARGAINING CLIMATE AHEAD OF THE NEXT ROUND



There is ... a desire on the part of public-sector unions to ensure that wage increases are no lower than the rate of inflation.



With the provincial election over and a new cabinet appointed, we will soon move into public-sector bargaining season in British Columbia. There are approximately 180 negotiated collective agreements covering 400,000 unionized workers set to expire between March and June 2025. What do the election results mean for provincial public-sector bargaining?

First, we continue to have an NDP government. The NDP is, undoubtedly, more labour friendly than the BC Conservatives. At the recent BC Federation of Labour (BCFED) convention, the Premier and the former and current Ministers of Labour addressed the convention, and many new and continuing MLAs were in attendance. This is a labour friendly government to be sure, but they must be mindful of the public coffers and public perceptions regarding salary increases for public-sector workers. While this government is unlikely to give away the farm, we can expect to see more positive results than we would have seen with a BC Conservative government at the helm.

The normal pattern is that the government will bargain with one of the larger public-sector unions first and the wage settlement achieved at that table will set the mandate for the remainder of the public-sector unions. We learned at a BCFED Public-Sector Bargaining Committee meeting in December that the BC General Employees' Union (BCGEU) is set to start bargaining in mid-January. This makes it likely that they will be the first union to reach a settlement with the government.

The BCGEU has said publicly that they are seeking “meaningful wage increases and improvements to benefits” as their top issues at the bargaining table.

In the last round of negotiations, the government estimated that the total cost of a 1% salary increase for provincial unionized employees and others with negotiated agreements was \$351 million. If you take into account all public-sector employees, the cost of a 1% increase was estimated to be \$438 million. The government spends about \$4.38 billion total on total compensation, which is about half of the provincial budget.

At this point, we have no indication of what the salary mandate from the province might be. There is, of course, a desire on the part of public-sector unions to ensure that wage increases are no lower than the rate of inflation. Cost of living continues to be a huge concern. Unions are also ready for improvements in areas like benefits which help to defray expenses.

At the BCFED convention, David Eby said, “It was your members that were out there hustling on the doorsteps throughout the campaign...that's why I'm standing here ... thank you, thank you, thank you.” The question on the minds of many union members now is: will the NDP's gratitude translate to gains at the bargaining table for the members who worked hard to have the party re-elected?

CONSIDER THE TECH REP

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Tech Reps have been around at BCIT for almost as long as the Institute.

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Academic staff unions in Canada can be a bit of an odd duck when it comes to union representation. In other sectors, shop stewards typically play a significant role in handling member grievances, sometimes up to and including appearing before an arbitrator. For academic unions, this is rare, and so is the case at the FSA.

Our Technology Representatives (or Tech Reps) play a largely communicative and educational role, freed up to do so by a professional Labour Relations staff employed to handle grievance case work. The resulting Tech Rep structure contains fantastic potential but also pitfalls for those occupying the role.

Tech Reps have been around at BCIT for almost as long as the Institute. They are first named in our June 1976 Collective Agreement, with the term noted to be synonymous with Shop or Union Steward. In '76 Steward was the preferred term, switching to Tech Rep in '78. For the FSA as an organization, the Tech Rep program is guided by FSA Policy 2.3.1, which

lays out the scope of the position—both whom a rep covers and how they may do it. Indeed, policies 2.3.1.2.1 and 2.3.1.2.3 understand that the position is one “information conduit” and that the nature of that information may be subject to change.

And, indeed, more Tech Reps are reporting taking the lead in communicating important FSA information to members in their area—such as updates from the Board, Department Selection Committee openings, and bargaining information. The response to this has been that more members—about 10% more—are recognizing Tech Reps as their first point of contact for many FSA inquiries.

Going forward, FSA Board and staff are hoping to build upon this inertia to strengthen the functioning of Departments and upholding the Collective Agreement. More information will be passed along to Tech Reps at our monthly meetings.

Please refer to the FSA's Bylaws & Policies and Tech Reps pages on our website for more information. If you have any questions, please reach out to Member Engagement Officer Matt Greaves.





I WAS ABLE TO MAKE SOME NOISE: INTERVIEW WITH FSA TECH REP ALAN STEWART



This is a top tier union.



So, Alan Stewart, thank you for agreeing to be interviewed by the FSA!

AS: Thank you for asking.

How long have you been at BCIT and in what capacities have you worked at the Institute?

AS: I started in December 2007, so it's been well over 15 years. I'm holding on for at least 20. I was hired into the Applied Research Group, which at the time was called GAIT - Group for Advanced Information Technologies. We are now called SMART – Smart Microgrid Applied Research Team. I'm mainly a programmer, writing code to gather readings from devices, store info in databases, then extract and display graphs as well as act on the readings.

You've been a Tech Rep for as long as I've been here, which, granted, is only about three years. How long have you been involved in the FSA and what different capacities?

AS: In the beginning of my time at BCIT, I wasn't that involved

in the FSA because I was just happy to have the job. But as time went on, I heard more and more about the union. I had done one or two inquiries about this or that. Nothing much. But then the Department needed a Tech Rep, so I happily volunteered for the position.

Is this your first experience with union work?

AS: This is the first time I worked in and experienced what a union is. And thank goodness it's the FSA because this is a top tier union to learn from.

That's very nice of you to say.

What was your work experience like before coming to BCIT?

AS: Programming, which I've been doing since, well, high school. My dad brought home some books on how to write BASIC on a teletype machine and I was hooked. I read all kinds of books on programming, wrote some BASIC games, went through university, 100% programming (with a little bit of math), and managed to get

into the precursor to Electronic Arts Canada called Distinctive Software at the time.

Eventually the opportunity came along to come to BCIT and do research work. I've stayed here because every project—every piece of a project—is different and interesting. And there's constantly more learning and more doing and that fascinates me.

One interesting thing that you do—that no other member does—is make card games for the staff. Does that gaming interest predate your interest in computers or is gaming something that came subsequently?

AS: As a kid, my parents had a few board games we played. They'd have friends come over and we'd play so the gaming interest was always there. Before I got into computers, I was reading things like first edition Dungeons and Dragons (D&D) stuff. So gaming was always present. I did write games on my ZX-81 including a D&D character generator. I wasn't creating that many new games, but I would always take other game programs and make them better, make them more

interesting to me. In some cases, it was just making them a bit more visual and fun.

Making the physical games came along as part of my work with Applied Research. Because of the nature of our work and software in SMART, there's not a lot to show. We can talk about the things we do and what microgrids involve, but it's hard to visualize these things. So, I came up with the idea of a card game—which was really more of a glorified set of flash cards—but the idea was we could say, here's our current grid and you build up these sections of it by applying these technologies and end up creating interconnected microgrids. It's a great talking tool for introductions at conferences.

What do you like to do when you're not here? Does gaming fall into that?

AS: I do collect board games. I love getting them and reading the rules and looking at the components and going, oh yeah, that's how they've done this or that. Gaming is a social thing for me. There's a group, Vancouver Playtesters, and we meet every other week at a game store downtown, Rain City Games, to physically test games, and every other week online to virtually test games. I get to play new and untested games and then really talk about and critique the games and suggest things to make them better.

You grew up in the north, yes?

AS: I was born in Edmonton and moved to Whitehorse when I was

in Grade One. I went through grade school there. My mom's still there. It was really fantastic living within walking distance of the school. Even when it was close to -40, you just dress for it, walk off to school and then try and get rid of all of your layers before you melt into a puddle. But it was great fun.

Did you like that? I imagine it was a close-knit community.

AS: Well, closer than here. I live in a condo and the only people I really know are the council members and a few others. Whereas, there, you have school friends and many of them live close by or closeish, at least in elementary school. When I was in high school, there were more kids being bussed in, but I was involved with the band group and knew more people that way. Which of course is different here, because it still feels isolating when not interacting with people on a daily basis.

What did you play in the band?

AS: Well, I tried to play the French horn. I was able to make some noise. With a lot of effort, I could translate notes on a page into some amount of sound. But it wasn't really music.

Brass instruments are hard to learn. You have to hold your mouth in a certain way. Seems onerous.

AS: And you know, I think I only did it because there wasn't a French horn in the band at the time. But eventually two more showed up so it became much more interesting then.

Is there anything else you'd like members to know?

AS: For the union, don't be afraid to reach out and ask questions. Sometimes the answers are going to be "no" or "that's outside our scope." But you will get reasons for it. You'll get a better understanding.

The researchers at CARI are pretty open for anyone who wants to come up and see what we do. Find a way to contact us! There are various e-mail addresses or reach out to me. We can show you the card games, we can talk about the stuff we do, and we can take you through the CARI lab to show the MAKE+ group and all the stuff that they work on as well as the equipment they use for manufacturing. They've got woodworking and metalworking equipment, the water-jet and laser cutters, and there's an entire group that just does 3D printing using all kinds of materials. The Natural Health and Food Products Research Group has a kitchen devoted to doing their work. They have their own 3D printers for food. They also have some very expensive testing equipment to test the quality of food, health supplements, and such.

Alan, thank you so much for taking the time today. I really appreciate it. I'll see you soon.

AS: You're welcome, Matt. Talk soon.



I'M TRANSPARENT. I FEEL LIKE THAT'S IMPORTANT FOR PEOPLE TO KNOW: INTERVIEW WITH TREASURER TRISH ALBINO



I plan to be involved with the FSA long term.



So Trish Albino, welcome to our interview. Thank you so much for making the time today.

TA: Thank you for having me.

So starting off with the general: how long have you been at BCIT and in what capacities?

TA: I started in the fall of 2016, teaching as a full-time faculty member. I also taught in what was known as Part-time Studies.

How long have you been working with the FSA?

TA: This is my second term on the Board; my 4th year—that sounds about right. I was recruited by Terry Gordon, the previous Treasurer. My first two-year term was as a Director-at-Large, then elected into the Treasurer role when Terry decided not to run again.

So is this your first experience in trade-union life?

TA: Correct. Prior to joining BCIT, I worked in an accounting firm, which is very much non-union, but a lot of my family members are union—my dad was a union member, both of my in-laws and my sister-in-law are all union members. My husband was a union member prior to starting his own business. So yeah, a lot of unions around me but not me directly, until recently.

You're a newish mom.

TA: Yes.

How's that going?

TA: It's going well. He's a toddler now, so of course that brings both challenges and joy every day. He's at the stage now where he's talking, so that's fun. He's putting more and more words together. It's exciting. I am so thankful that I moved to BCIT from my previous job.

As a faculty member the hours are very good, especially having summers off.

Yeah, the flexibility that comes from being FSA faculty can be very, very helpful for parents.

TA: There's a lot of flexibility to a certain extent, with the exception of when you're teaching a class.

Did you take maternity leave?

TA: I did. I took a 12-month maternity leave and was able to use accumulated sick time. And the provisions in the Collective Agreement have improved significantly since I went on mat leave! It's even better now, I would say!

Yes, I remember. That language was a hard-fought win.

TA: Oh yeah, absolutely.

So, when you're not on campus, what do you like to do?

TA: In the summer, we spend a lot of time camping. This past summer, we went camping with our son for the first time—he loved it.

We went to Cultus Lake for 10 days, right at the end of summer. We like to stick to BC. We haven't ventured too far away yet, but I would say in the summertime that's a big thing that we're doing.

How old is your son again?

TA: He just turned two.

Oh, congratulations. That's very brave of you to take a two-year-old out camping.

TA: I thought so.

How did it go?

TA: It went well actually. He got a tricycle for his second birthday, and we brought that along. He was obsessed with it, rain or shine. Which was good because the first three days we were there, it was pouring rain. He was out there in his muddy buddy, helmet, rain boots—just riding through the mud. Not a care in the world. Then the weather became beautiful and hot.

We're actually "glamping". We have an RV, so we're not in a tent.

We have like a two-person MEC tent that I'm determined to move out for something huge and a bit more up-market.

TA: Have you camped with your twins?

No, never. They'll be turning five next summer, and I want like a palatial tent with multiple rooms before that. This seems desirable with toddlers.

Is there anything you'd like members to know about you or the Union?

TA: I'm transparent. I feel like that's important for people to know.

There's a lot of value in that honesty, I think.

TA: I think so. I see myself as a bit of a straight shooter, I guess.

I really like my involvement with the Union, even though it does demand a decent amount of time sometimes. You know, that's hard, especially as a new mom to find that—and most Board members are volunteering. I think you really have to enjoy it.

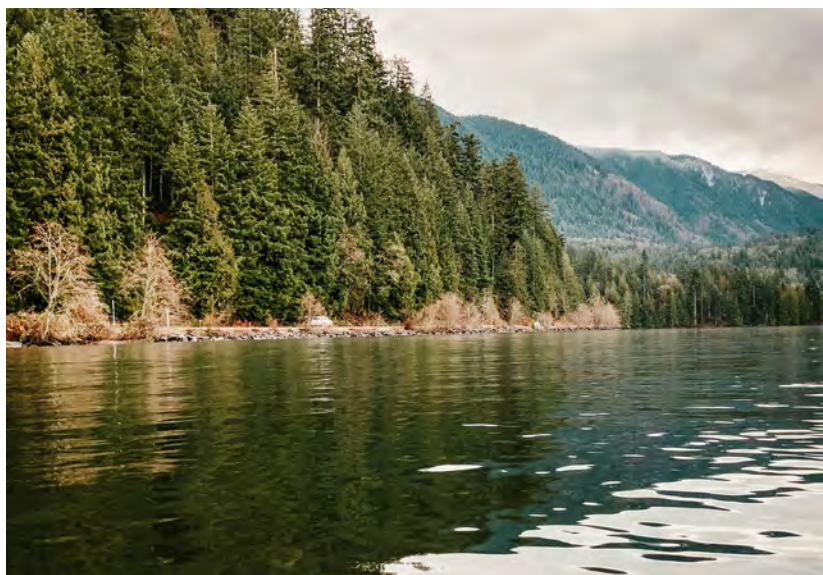
When I first started, I was in my little bubble in my Department. Then, you become more involved, and you learn about the different schools and how other folks do things, meeting people from different areas. And that's been really good for me.

I plan to be involved with the FSA long term, even on the bargaining side.

There's so much value having people be involved for a long time. As people retire, who is going to hold all of that knowledge?

Trish Albino, thanks so much for meeting with me today.

TA: Have a good one, Matt.





NUMBERS TELL A STORY: INTERVIEW WITH FSA INFORMATION OFFICER ANNA CHAU

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I just feel really happy working here.

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Anna, thank you so much for agreeing to be interviewed today.

AC: Thank you, Matt. I'm happy to be here.

How long have you been at the FSA and in what capacities?

AC: I have been here since January 2024, so ten months (at time of interview), and I started as the Operations Assistant. Following a vacancy in the office, I interviewed and am now the Information Officer.

What in your background allowed you to make that transition? Those don't necessarily seem like adjacent positions.

AC: No, my background is in inventory management. I did that for a decade, working for a private jewelry company. I worked on spreadsheets and database applications, which allowed me to hone my skills—not just in Excel but visual data analytics. It's a different industry, but at the same time numbers are numbers.

I think some people perceive reports as just numbers, but numbers tell a story. If you can make that story appealing or simplify it or just cater to how one person would look at it, you can really get a point across. I feel like that's part of my job: to simplify information for everyone.

Yeah, that's such a skill: to be able to take data and then render it into a cogent narrative. Are there other experiences you've had that you think helped prepare you for this role?

AC: I worked customer service for over two decades. Everybody I meet is a friend and everybody I meet I can learn from. Hearing their stories and background is so interesting! Pierre, who was our previous Information Officer, and I had such a similar love for data analytics and database management, and I was lucky to have him as a predecessor to learn from.

Are there differences you notice coming out of the private sector? Are there differences working in a public post-secondary institution and working in the private sector?

AC: Yes, 100%. I feel like the public sector is—I want to say—structured in a way that you're well taken care of as an employee. There are benefits to working in the private sector, but it's different and usually you're in a smaller capacity.

What are some challenges associated with the Information Officer role at the FSA?

AC: I guess delivering the most updated information in an efficient way that I need to provide to staff and Board. I'm also new to unions and this kind of institution, so for me there's a bit of a learning curve.

It's a big, odd place BCIT. I came from a public-sector post-secondary and it still took me a year and a half to figure this

place out. It's very peculiar and I don't mean that in a bad way.

AC: Yeah, I agree. I love how different it is, you know? It's so different from what my previous workplaces were like. I'm liking everything that I'm learning and continue to discover about BCIT.

I want to shift gears a bit because, if folks reading this don't know you that well, they won't know that you are kind of the office gourmet. Or at least that's how I'll describe it.

If you could cook any meal this evening—with no restrictions on ingredients or price—what would that be?

AC: I really like a good beef bourguignon. If I could make that every week, I probably would. There's just something so hearty and delicious about that dish. Oh, my goodness, that's probably something that is a treat for me that I would make tonight.

Do you make it often?

AC: I don't. And that's why it would be such a treat. I've made it, maybe, a handful of times, and each time I don't know why I don't make it more often.

Do you like cooking French?

AC: Not necessarily; I'll cook my favorite meals, which are, I would say, more Western, like a roasted chicken or prime rib. I like Italian; I make pretty good red wine Bolognese sauce.

How do you make your Bolognese? Walk me through it.

AC: I do a mix of beef and pork. Sometimes I will really spice it up and I'll put a lot of red peppers and chilies. I cook it until it's ready to go with the veggies, with the mirepoix. I'll add in the beef broth. I'll add red wine, then let it cook down into this kind of sweet, succulent sauce. It's one of my favorite things to make for my family.

How long do you let that simmer?

AC: At least two hours. You can continue to add more broth or wine and let it cook down, depending on how deep or vibrant you want the sauce to be.

So you're really watching it and adjusting the flavor—there's a lot of care there.

AC: Clearly, I like food.

So if those are your favorite meals to make, if you could choose any meal to be made for you, no constraints, what would that be?

AC: I like seafood, but I can't cook it that well. I had a meal at the Shangri-La once—baked salmon with a warm potato salad—that I have never been able to recreate. It was just delicious. The salmon was so tender, and the potato salad was not your typical potato salad, you know, made with mayonnaise. It was made with almost like a dill infused olive oil. It's one of my favorite meals, and I've never been able to recreate it.



Is there anything else you'd like FSA members to know?

AC: Yeah, I just feel really happy working here. I'm still trying to find my way around! But over the past ten months, everybody's been so welcoming, and I've made great working relationships in the office - I'm very happy.

Anna Chau, thank you very much for sitting down with me today.

AC: Thanks, Matt.

A LEVEL THAT SPEAKS TO EXPERIENCE: NAVIGATING THE INSTITUTE PLACEMENT COMMITTEE



Have a conversation with the FSA members that sit on the IPC.



Ray deVries, thank you so, so much for visiting us today and answering a few questions. I really appreciate it.

RdV: Thank you for having me.

How long have you been at BCIT, Ray, and in what capacity?

RdV: I've been at BCIT just over 20 years as an FSA Specialized Faulty member, in the role of counsellor in BCIT's Counselling & Student Development.

The reason I asked you here today is because you have experiences navigating the Institute Placement Committee (IPC) process.

RdV: We had a member join our Department in September 2019 as a temporary contractor backfilling for a leave of absence. At the time of hiring the person was initially placed on the salary scale by the Selection Committee.

The member was not informed that they could challenge the initial placement and then COVID happened. The member received an additional credential and was eventually told that they could apply for a salary advancement. So, they made an application to the Institute Placement Committee (IPC), which was declined.

We were surprised the member was declined by the committee, so we let the member know they ought to appeal it. They appealed and were declined a second time. And around that same time, we had two other members hired, both of whom obtained additional credentials and both of whom applied to the IPC for advancement. Their step increase was also declined. We learned then that a non-voting representative could be nominated from the Department to speak to the IPC and when the time came for that next meeting, I was waiting in the wings to speak. However, I was never invited into that meeting, which was a big surprise.

Afterwards, I spoke to Terry Gordon, then FSA Treasurer, to convey our Departmental practices. Our first member made their third appeal and the other two members made their second. I was invited into the meeting and spoke to the IPC about our Departmental practice of recognizing this particular credential and having it recognized in a step increase. The third decision was made in our applicant's favor.

Why was it that this person was too low on the placement scale? Do we know why that came about?

RdV: The first person hired was on backfill. Subsequent to their starting work here, they were granted a professional registration, and then made the application for step increase based on that.

The same thing applied to the other two applicants. I'd said earlier that we hired two new people after the first applicant. In fact, three new people were hired in total after the first IPC applicant I mentioned. Of the three new hires, one person already had the registration and got credit for it. The other two were similarly new graduates who got their registration after being hired. When we got to the third appeal for the first applicant, the other new members' applications were also on the table and had in fact been denied once. So, all three people got a retroactive decision in our favor—which was backdated to the time of their initial applications.

So, when a new hire is made, whose job is it to recommend initial placement on the pay scale?

RdV: It's the selection committee's job (see Collective Agreement Article 5.2.3.2.5), which then

goes to their related manager for review, or Dean. If there's disagreement between the Dean, or equivalent, and the committee, the former is required to provide a rationale. Departmental selection committees are comprised of 50% FSA members and 50% management. Even if there's only one manager and five FSA members, it's a 50-50 split.

What else comes to mind that could help our members navigate the IPC process?

RdV: One great piece of advice—one really great suggestion that was made by our FSA folk—was to caucus or have a conversation with the FSA members that sit on the IPC so as to convey the rationale for a step increase. That was a very, very useful suggestion because my understanding of the IPC is that it's made-up of 11 people. One is the chair, and the other ten members are half FSA members, half non-FSA. And so, because we were able to caucus with our FSA members, we were able to present our rationale more clearly.

On top of that, members need to pay attention because sometimes there are small changes that can significantly affect the process. So, one thing that I noticed was that when I was initially hired in 2002, I got a paper copy welcome to BCIT acceptance letter. And in that letter was a sentence that said you can appeal your initial placement. My colleagues hired later that I mentioned had electronic

welcome to BCIT letters which made no mention that you have the right to appeal.

Neither did anybody on the selection committee. Nor the manager. When COVID commenced and the person was making their first application at some point the manager said, "Oh, by the way, you have the right to appeal," which was new information to my colleague. Something in the paperwork had been changed along the way.

And so, for me, this was one of the recommendations that I made, whether it was direct or sort of insinuated: that the old paper copy had had clear information to new people that they could appeal initial placement as well as make appeals and request salary advancement on the basis of achievements. All that information was now unavailable on the digital sheet new hires received.

That's a big deal. The FSA tries to inform our members of that in the literature, but we don't have access to all new members. Moreover, it's BCIT who's granting us access to them in the form of orientations. So, it's always something that can be revoked or withheld.

RdV: I completely agree. I've made it a point for me to inform new members, "welcome to our Department and oh, by the way, you have the right to appeal the initial placement as well as you

have the right to apply for a step increase on the basis of a registration."

That's the advice that our LR team also gives to folks who sit on selection committees because of how important it is. Ditto when I do orientations. Almost invariably if the group is more than 10, one or two will come to me saying, "you know, I think that maybe was I misplaced." It's extremely common.

RdV: Part of the reason is that the resume, as applicants apply for a job, puts their best foot forward, so to speak. It doesn't necessarily include all of the work experience that they've had. So, when making an application, and a selection committee is determining initial placement, all the work experience might not be on hand for the committee to access.

So, it behooves somebody—whether it's HR or whether it's the committee or whatever—once the candidate has been determined that they are going to be offered a job, to ask if their resume includes relevant work experience because part of determining initial placement is based on past work experience. And if it's not all on the resume, well, we can't give you credit for it.

Ray deVries, thank you so much for speaking with me today. I know that the membership will get a lot out of it.

RdV: Thanks, Matt.



DOES MY MANAGER CONTROL MY VACATION SELECTION?

The answer to the question posed in the title to this article can be stated very directly: No.

To give a bit more robust explanation: vacation selection is under the control of Department members. The Collective Agreement lays out a two-part framework for planning and selecting vacations. First step: the Department (defined as the manager and all FSA members designated as a Department, with each having one vote) meet to plan a vacation schedule. This schedule is a calendar that has empty vacation slots, which individual Department members have a right to select as their vacation.

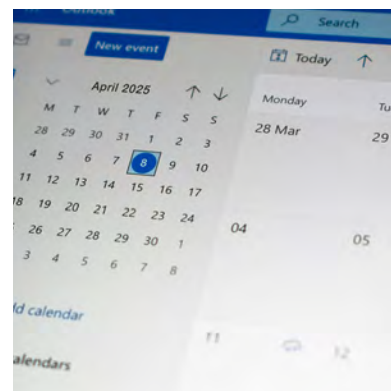
For example, a Department might plan enough vacation slots in July and August to cover everyone's vacation, and everyone will simply be forced to select dates in July and August. There is no seniority ranking for choosing vacation slots. Everyone in the Department ranks equally; so, you will need to iron out disagreement with other Department members if there is a conflict regarding which member is able to take vacation at a given time.

Some Departments may plan vacation slots throughout the year, not just in the summer. Where there is no slot, there is no vacation day to choose. Departments can always meet to review the slots, or move them, if plans change.

Our democratic vacation selection is premised on a Department that meets to plan their work regularly, determines what is essential to accomplish, and how to fit vacation amidst and around those essential requirements. Democracy, though, is hard work. Some Departments may have simply delegated powers to a manager to do the planning and approval. They may wish to take those powers back. If so, please contact the FSA's Member Engagement Officer at your earliest convenience.



Our democratic vacation selection is premised on a Department that meets to plan their work regularly.



Vision

A dynamic and supportive educational community.

Mission

Excellent working conditions for all members through representation, negotiation, and advocacy.

Values

- **Integrity:** We are transparent and accountable in our decisions and actions.
- **Solidarity:** We stand together to protect our rights and achieve collective change.
- **Empowerment:** We equip our members to understand and advocate for their rights.
- **Equity:** We recognize diversity and pursue inclusion and justice for all members.

Board Members

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*Positions at time of publication



Contact

BCIT FACULTY &
STAFF ASSOCIATION

SE16-116 3700 Willingdon Ave.
Burnaby, BC V5G 3H2

T: 604.432.8695

F: 604.432.8348

E: fsa@bcit.ca

W: bcitfsa.ca

 [@bcitfsa](https://twitter.com/bcitfsa)