

THE NUFA NEWS

NUFA Communications Committee

November 2014

JARVIS | KUNDRATS | PETERS | WENGHOFFER

Issue # 21

Contents

- pp. 1-2 **In Memoriam: D. Franks**
- p. 3 **OCUFA'S Priorities for 2014-15: e-learning and "Ontario Online"**
/ Gyllian Phillips
- pp. 4-5 **Facts about Online Courses**
/ Rob Breton
- p. 6 **NUFA Executive, Standing Committees, & Representatives on Other Non-Association Committees (2014-15)**
- pp. 7-8 **Real Live Learning**
/ Uldis Kundrats
- Special Announcements**
- p. 9 **Births**
- p. 9 **NUFA Holiday Social 2014**
- p. 10 **CASBU Poster Campaign**

In Memoriam

Dr. Douglas Franks, recently retired Associate Professor in the Schulich School of Education, passed away on October 19th, 2014. He is remembered fondly by his wife Sandra, children Aaron and Jennifer, and their respective families.

Doug was NUFA's Member-at-Large for Education for two years in 1996-97, and 1997-98. In 1998-99, he became the NUFA Vice-President, a position he maintained up to and including 2005-06. The Association was certified in January of 1994, and so during our 20-year history, Doug served for 10 years. A *Celebration of Life* event was hosted at NU on Wednesday, October 29th, which was very well-attended by current and past colleagues and friends. The special evening included a touching eulogy by Dr. John Lundy, several classical pieces played by NBSO members, poetry, a digital photo tribute, reflections shared by colleagues and friends, and comments from Sandra and their children. What follows are a few excerpts from various thoughts shared prior to, or during the event.

Throughout his long career at Nipissing, Doug Franks was always the consummate professional—dedicated to whatever task was at hand, prepared and well-informed, pleasant and courteous, and never without a ready smile. It is important to note that his commitment to mathematics teaching and learning wasn't limited to his work in the Faculty of Education. Indeed, he saw it as part of his role to facilitate and promote closer ties between the Faculties.



(continued on p. 2)

In Memoriam (continued)

To this end, Doug often participated in math seminars or meetings in the Faculty of Arts & Science. He was always ready and willing to discuss ways of improving student preparedness for post-secondary mathematics study. He had a particular interest in the MATH 1070 (Foundations of Arithmetic for Teachers) course, supported efforts by the Computer Science & Mathematics department to provide “outreach” activities for senior elementary and secondary students in the area, and worked with the department on a joint proposal to establish NU as a centre of excellence in mathematics and mathematics education.

Dr. Ted Chase, friend, colleague, former Dean and Vice-President

Doug served as Vice-President of NUFA during the period of 2000-06. He was also on the Grievance Committee and was a key member of the Collective Bargaining Team. In all of his roles with NUFA, Doug was even-tempered, fair minded and always graciously collegial. These were extremely important virtues in the often emotional and high intensity world of NUFA business. And they were particularly valued by the more excitable and less gracious among us. While at the bargaining table, we all kept notes of what was happening but Doug's notes were by far the most comprehensive and precise. I recall that on more than a few occasions, Doug's notes were relied on by both sides as the critical record of what was actually agreed to. Yet, he was characteristically modest about his contributions. NUFA is grateful to Doug for his service, his wisdom, his attention to detail, his collegiality and sense of fair play and his exceptional dedication to the faculty association. He was a friend and a treasured resource for NUFA.

Dr. Chris Sarlo, friend and colleague

Doug has been an influential mentor for me at a number of stages, having been one of my B.Ed. instructors; my Faculty Advisor during teaching placements; my M.Ed. Thesis Supervisor; and finally as a co-researcher/co-author here at NU since 2006. I believe that Doug encompassed, in his professional pursuits and friendships with colleagues and students, an example of someone who was at once highly informed and intelligent, yet also genuine and compassionate. He was the kind of “human academic” one would wish to emulate—striking a healthy balance between family loyalty and university commitments.

Dr. Daniel Jarvis, friend and colleague

OCUFA'S Priorities for 2014-15: e-learning and "Ontario Online"

by Gyllian Phillips, NUFA Past President

At the recent meeting of the OCUFA Board of Directors in October, OCUFA asked the Board to support three initiatives for the 2014-15 academic year: the provincial Jointly Sponsored Pension Plan discussion, faculty complement/precarious academic work, and e-learning. I hope that over the course of this year, NUFA will address each of these in turn, but this edition of the *NUFA News* examines on-line education (aka e-learning, alternative delivery, blended delivery, distance education, and probably several other terms I haven't yet heard).

OCUFA's concerns stem from the tendency of individual universities to turn to on-line education as a way of cutting costs and from the Ontario government's intention to encourage the development of more online offerings. To that end, the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU), with the Council of Ontario Universities (COU), has established the Ontario Online Learning Consortium (OOLC). Until very recently, the MTCU has resisted including faculty on its Steering committee and on the final make-up of its Board of Directors. OCUFA has been working to have this changed, and as of November 6th, there is reason to hope that faculty expertise will be solicited for the OOLC. Kate Lawson, president of OCUFA, received a letter from Rhonda Lenton, the co-chair of the Ontario Online Steering Committee, asking OCUFA to "provide a short list of individuals who would have expertise to help guide the new consortium as a director." The OOLC Steering Committee has been tasked with getting the new entity up and running, including soliciting membership from Ontario universities and colleges and overseeing a process for the appointment of the first Governing Board. While this is a positive sign on the provincial front, concerns and gaps in our knowledge still remain about the move to e-learning. Here are a few things that OCUFA is doing to work to support members as they advocate for high-quality e-learning options that respect academic freedom, intellectual property, and collective agreements:

- Host an **e-learning workshop on March 20, 2015** as a first step to developing policy recommendations and strategies for collective bargaining around e-learning.
- Expand the membership of the OCUFA ad hoc **Committee on Online Learning**.
- Continue to develop a **website** and a **checklist** for faculty considering online courses/programs.

Facts about Online Courses

by Rob Breton, NUFA President

It is quite possible that Faculty have some misunderstandings about online courses. I'm pretty sure that the Employer has many misunderstandings about online courses, but today I address Faculty.

In the last round of bargaining, CASBU negotiators came up with a very helpful way to think about and classify the courses we teach: "on-campus courses" are courses where the instructor and the students are in the same physical space; "alternative delivery mode" courses designate courses where the instructor and students for some or all of the instruction are not in the same physical space; and "pre-packaged" courses identify courses where the content is produced by and owned by the University, and an instructor is paid to teach the pre-packaged material.

Alternative Delivery Mode

These might be online courses developed and taught by a single Member, though they might also include courses that combine online and face-to-face delivery. To be clear, neither the Dean nor any other administrator can compel anyone in FASBU or CASBU to develop and run an alternative delivery course. If you are in FASBU, you have the right under 27.9 of the CA to reject online delivery. If you are a part-time CASBU Member it is clearly more difficult to turn down an online course because you would be turning down employment and turning down pay.

NUFA's position is that the academic unit decides delivery mode, and this is an established practice at Nipissing. If the unit wants an online course, the unit then staffs the course in the same way that it would staff a face-to-face course.

Another misconception FASBU and CASBU members might have regarding online courses is that teaching one means that you give up your intellectual property. It is quite possible that this is the reason so few Members decide to experiment with online delivery (though questions about pedagogy and spending endless hours emailing students are surely at play as well).

(continued on p. 5)

Facts about Online Courses (continued)

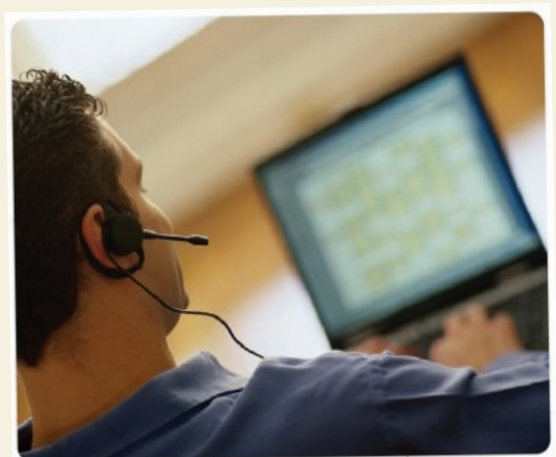
by Rob Breton, NUFA President

In any case, an online course can be counted as part of a FASBU's Members regular workload. "A course is a course is a course," we like to say. The only difference is that if the online course has fewer than 15 enrolled students, the course is not part of regular workload and is treated as overload.

FASBU Members can create online courses and then put them on repeatedly, perhaps changing a few things year-to-year as is done with face-to-face courses, as long as, once again, the academic unit as a whole determines that the course is to run in a given year (as it does with all courses) and to run in that way. The intellectual property of the course remains in the possession of the Member, just as we maintain intellectual property over face-to-face courses. This is also true for CASBU Members teaching these courses: a course is a course is a course as a matter of course.

Pre-Packaged Courses

CASBU Members, however, often teach "canned" or pre-packaged courses in certain disciplines. FASBU Members might teach these courses as part of regular workload, but as the Dean ultimately determines workload, I'm not sure if this ever happens. Though the University owns these courses and can hire who they want to teach them, and are not limited in the number of them that they can run, it is important to remember that, again, academic units create "course masters," ensure that the courses are of a high standard and kept up-to-date, and seek out qualified members to teach them. It is also important to remember that all Members, CASBU and FASBU, have academic freedom. Academic freedom cannot be abrogated and a Member cannot be forced to relinquish it. This can lead to difficult situations and to the perception of a contest between intellectual property and academic freedom. Academic units pursuing pre-packaged courses should in any case keep in mind that conditions cannot be imposed on Members that would suspend or restrict their academic freedom.



NUFA Executive, Standing Committees, & Representatives on Other Non-Association Committees 2014-15

Executive

President	Rob Breton
Vice-President	Susan Srigley
Past-President	Gyllian Phillips
Treasurer	Dan Walters
CASBU Officer	Corina Irwin
Grievance Officers (2)	Sal Renshaw (A&S) Jeff Scott (SSoE)
Member-at-Large (APS)	Manuel Litalien
Member-at-Large (A&S)	Pavlina Radia
Member-at-Large (SSoE)	Todd Horton
Member-at-Large (CASBU)	Rhiannon Don
Chief Negotiator (FASBU)	Hilary Earl (Appointed)
Chief Negotiator (CASBU)	Mark Crane (Appointed)
Executive Assistant	Angela Fera



Standing Committees

Communications Committee	Dan Jarvis, Uldis Kundrats, Wendy Peters, Richard Wenghofer
Constitution Committee	Adam Adler, Larry Patriquin, Timothy Sibbald, David Tabachnick
Gender Equity and Diversity	Roger Bernardes, Kathy Mantas, Rosemary Nagy, Katrina Srigley
Grievance Committee	R. Breton (President), S. Srigley (Vice-President), S. Renshaw & J. Scott (Grievance Officers), C. Irwin (CASBU Officer), & R. Don
Scholarship Committee	Adam Adler, Darren Campbell, Nancy Maynes, Sarah Winters
Social Committee	Steven Arnocky, Liz Ashworth, Natalya Brown, Douglas Gosse, Joanne Kmiec

Non-Association Committees

Board of Governors	Glenda Black, John Kovacs, Matti Saari, Jeff Scott
Joint Health & Safety	Christine Cho, Darren Ferry, Kristin Lucas, Kelly Morris, Linda Piper
CAUT Defence Fund	Nathan Colborne
CAUT Council	Rob Breton (President)
OCUFA Board	Susan Srigley (Vice-President)
Pension and Benefits	Hilary Earl, Mike Parr
NUFA TP Observers	Glenn Brophey (TPF APS), Dan Jarvis (TPF SSoE), Nathan Kozuskanich (TPF A&S), Jeff Dech (TPU)

Real Live Learning

by Uldis Kundrats

It's where it starts and finishes. It's the Alpha and Omega of much of what we call "education." It's real, live learning and there is no substitute for it.

Nowadays universities often struggle to make ends meet and to re-jig the complement of services they offer. In the search for potentially profitable revenue streams that sparkle with the appealing pop and sizzle of "something new and different," the option of online education can be aired as a way of dealing with the financial problems of the present and those on the near horizon.

Without a doubt, there is a certain cachet attached to being in tune with a technologically sophisticated future. Older universities (and sometimes small ones, as well) can welcome opportunities to spruce up their techno-related profiles by pursuing pathways that exploit digital mediation of the learning process.

No matter how appealing the lustre of DIY "student-centred" virtual learning might be, navigating the outer reaches of the online world may be coupled with a tendency to ignore or downplay the unique value of professors teaching students in classrooms, lecture halls, laboratories, and other places in which instructors and learners meet, connect and communicate.

It's likely that many NUFA members recall the start of their teaching careers with a mixture of fond remembrance and bemusement. It is special to experience the combination of excitement, nervous anticipation, and occasional transcendence that can be involved in offering a lecture to a roomful of students for the first time. So often, the full extent of the preparation, concentration, and exercise of voice and mind that is required to do it well is not perceived accurately by students and outsiders. Professors have a first-person understanding about how tough it can be.

NUFA members who have been providing real, live learning experiences for years, or even decades, can still work hard to summon up new, creative ways to express their thoughts in the classroom, lab or lecture hall. This can be hard to do at times, as students' readiness to take in new information and ideas varies a lot. In addition, their attention may be deflected by the colourfully-distracting screens of their laptops, tablets, and smart phones, as well as the hyper-stimulating residue of the eye-candy and trivia of popular culture as a whole.

(continued on p. 8)

Real Live Learning (continued)

by Uldis Kundrats

No matter how difficult it may sometimes seem to relate to all of the students they encounter in learning situations, NUFA members are fulfilling a crucially important responsibility when they teach in a live setting that holds the promise of intelligent interaction. Their commitment to the primacy of in-person instruction may be evidenced in many ways that enrich and inform the lives of students at Nipissing.

Good lectures can be seen as singular events (and accomplishments) for both learners and instructors. Although it's true that some students may view attending classes as a chore, others consider their participation a highly valuable component of an eventful journey of personal development and discovery. Of course, along the way, they are aided by the energy, enthusiasm, and disciplined thinking of their professors.

I believe that the connection between teaching and learning almost always reaches its peak in a real physical environment. It is there that professors' expression of complex thought through speech, their responsiveness to questions, and the channeling of their concentration and intelligence in focusing on a specific topic can allow students unique opportunities to observe a trained and skilled mind at work in some of the best ways possible. We can only hope that the insights they acquire will stay with them and remind them of the powerful reach that real, live learning can have and the important part it plays in the Nipissing University community.



Nipissing University Faculty Association (NUFA) Website:

<http://www.nufa.ca/>

Special Announcements

Births

On February 21st, 2014, **Connor Patrick Law Sweezey** joined the family of Barbi Law (BPHE) and Shawn Sweezey.

On May 2nd, 2014, **Hazel Rose Hansen** joined the family of Kim and Steve Hansen (BPHE).

On September 12th, 2014, **Jocelynn Jing-Yu Graham** joined the family of Tatianna and Ryan Graham (BPHE), and new big sister Madison.

On October 7th, 2014, **William Mark Ackerman** joined the family of Laura Peturson (FAVA), Andrew Ackerman (FAVA), and new big sister Jane.

On October 20th, 2014, **Victoria Alexandra Karasseva** joined the family of Melanie and Alex (Mathematics) Karasseva, and new big sister Sophia.

Note: The Communications Committee thanks all who provided birth announcements. Submissions are invited for all future issues.



NUFA Holiday Social 2014

The NUFA Social Committee invites you to the Annual Holiday Social on Saturday November 29th, 2014 from 6 pm to 9 pm at the Robert J. Surtees Athletic Centre Boardroom. This year, it will be twice the fun! Enjoy the company of your colleagues while cheering on both Women's and Men's Basketball teams. Drinks and appetizers will be provided. Partners and children are welcome.

Please RSVP by Monday November 24th by contacting Natalya at natalyab@nipissingu.ca. Please also indicate whether you require vegetarian/vegan options.



CASBU Poster Campaign (<http://webelongatnipissing.tumblr.com>)

by *Rhiannon Don*

We Belong at Nipissing is a poster and social media campaign featuring the members of the Nipissing University Faculty Association's Contract Academic Staff Bargaining Unit (NUFA and CASBU). Times are tough in the post-secondary sector, and it is toughest for contract faculty at universities across North America. We are paid the least; we have minimal job security; we have limited access to development funds, office space, and other resources, including benefits and pensions. In the last round of bargaining, the CASBU negotiating team brought proposals to the university administration that would see the research, service, and other scholarly activities of our members recognized for what they contribute to the university community. The administration responded to our proposals by telling us that our jobs are teaching only. We know better. We know that research, service, and other scholarly activities are crucial to being academics because they make us better as teachers. They are part of our practice, not something separate. It would have been very easy to respond to this round of collective bargaining in a negative way, but we are choosing to do something different. We are choosing to acknowledge our positions as contract academic staff. We are choosing to become visible in a culture that often ignores what we contribute. We are choosing to celebrate ourselves and our accomplishments by acknowledging the work that we do. If the administration wants to think of us as teaching only, let them. We know the truth. We belong at Nipissing.

To support this campaign please share the Tumblr page, the images, and use the hashtag #webelongatnipissing through your personal social media accounts or department ones. Any CASBU members who are interested in participating should contact rhiannod@nipissingu.ca.

As the Member-at-Large for CASBU, I represent CASBU on the NUFA executive and on the grievance committee.

Rhiannon Don
Service Course Instructor
#webelongatnipissing

www.fairemploymentweek.ca

www.nufa.ca

