

## **CUPE BC Universities Committee**

### **Report to Convention – April 2018**

---

The Universities Committee consists of the Presidents or designates representing ten Locals of the University of British Columbia (UBC - Locals 116, 2278, and 2950), Simon Fraser University (SFU - Local 3338), University of Victoria (UVIC - Locals 917, 951 and 4163), University of Northern BC (UNBC - Local 3799), Royal Roads University (RRU - Local 3386) and Thompson Rivers University (TRU - Local 4879). The committee functions as the coordinating body for CUPE workers at these universities, and liaises with CUPE workers at other post-secondary institutions in BC and in other provinces. Our meetings provide important opportunities for the committee to discuss common concerns and plan strategies on a sectoral basis.

*Universities Committee; Chair - Cindy McQueen, Co-Chair - Lois Rugg, Recording Secretary - Fiona Brady Lenfesty, and Staff Advisor - David Scott. Lois Rugg attends the National Post Secondary Task Force on behalf of the CUPE BC Universities Committee at the National table, where she also serves as Co-Chair of the National Committee.*

#### **Committee Meetings**

The Universities Committee met on October 19<sup>th</sup> 2018, where we reviewed local reports, and developed our strategies. We met again on February 15<sup>th</sup> where we continued to review our reports on key issues from all regions of the province, identified potential resolutions that will assist in addressing our challenges for example, structure on the board of governance and funding for the post-secondary sector.

#### **The key issues were as follows:**

##### **Bargaining**

Most Universities' Collective Agreements will expire, in accordance with the provincial mandate, on March 31, 2019. Locals are ramping up in preparation of bargaining in the fall of 2018.

**Precarious Workers**

Many of our University Locals in the province are continuing to overuse casual, temporary and auxiliary contract staff. With the continual overuse, some of our members are easily classified as precarious workers. We are seeing a rising trend where management continues to employ casual, temporary and auxiliary contract workers instead of posting permanent positions. These positions are often without benefits, seniority or stability. Precarious workers are also at a much higher risk of injury. Locals will continue to address precarious work in bargaining and enforce existing conversion language in our contracts.

**Long-Term Underfunding of Post-Secondary Education**

Throughout our committee meetings, we shared common concerns and issues that are similar throughout the province. Of these common concerns, the most worrisome is the long-term underfunding of education in BC. This has a direct impact on post-secondary education.

With our new Provincial Government, the committee feels education must be in the forefront of all discussions around lobbying for Ministry meetings and we must be included in that process.

Our committee has focused on the damage done by the underfunding of education, building and maintenance, and commit to bringing these education concerns to public forums. We continue to reach out to the K-12 sector and Colleges sector for support in this fight against the decimation of the education system. We encourage all locals to bring forward an awareness campaign to educate members on the value of training and learning opportunities.

Underfunding of post-secondary education should be on the minds of every person in British Columbia.

### **Our Awareness Campaign**

The core values of investing in employees provides continuity in our workplace, and skills upgrading provides increased job security. Our Universities sector is working towards developing an Awareness Campaign, which will assist locals in educating our members on the value of training and learning opportunities. Creating member awareness will assist all Post-Secondary Locals at their respective bargaining tables.

### **Loss of Bargaining Work**

Our committee members are extremely concerned that CUPE work is being methodically moved to non-unionized 'associations' across the province. We continue to gather information on the loss of jobs and at which universities. This information will help us do battle across the sectors, prevent future losses, secure our bargaining language, and bring these jobs back in house. This coupled with unorganized workers presents an opportunity for future organizing efforts.

### **Sexual Assault Policy**

In 2016, the BC government passed legislation requiring all post-secondary institutions implement policies and procedures regarding sexual assault and sexual violence. Across the province locals participated in consultations on their campuses as these policies and procedures were developed. Locals continue to bring forward the importance of ensuring policies do not only address issues for students, but for all campus community members including staff. Locals have also highlighted the importance of providing support and training for staff members and activists who are likely to be the recipients of disclosure.

### **Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action**

The committee will be consulting with a member of the Indigenous Committee to identify ways we can support calls to action recommendations for the Post Secondary sector.

**Thanks**

The committee thanks our Staff Advisor, David Scott, Communications Representative Janet Slizke, Research Representative Sarah St. John and support staff that assist us with our work.

**Respectfully submitted:**

Cindy McQueen, Chair  
Lois Rugg, Co-Chair  
Laura Yvonne Bulk  
Donal Burrows  
David Lance  
Fiona Brady Lenfesty  
Craig Marykuca  
Greg Melnechuk  
Karen Ranalletta  
Caroline Sewell  
Kara White  
David Scott – Staff Advisor

April 2018

