

**York University Faculty Association  
Annual Trustees' Report  
2015-16**

**Submitted by**

**Carlota McAllister, Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies  
Rob Tordoff, Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies**

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In keeping with Article 3.5 of the YUFA Constitution, two trustees are elected at the Annual General Membership Meeting. They are responsible for reviewing policies and activities within YUFA over the past academic year. They are also able to make recommendations for policy review or change in activity.

In preparation for the writing of this report, we examined the past year's minutes of Executive Council, Stewards' Council, as well as those of the Annual Membership Meeting and General Membership Meetings. We also examined the Financial Report from the 2014-15 auditors.

It is our view that YUFA has fulfilled its obligations to its membership in giving close attention to all significant issues affecting its membership and the broader community. We identified the following principal issues that have been considered or addressed over the past year: bargaining, collegial governance, long-range planning, equity, and divestment. Other matters of concern that we have identified are equity, university governance, and the reopening of the Faculty Club. Lastly, we have reviewed YUFA's Financial Affairs.

## **1. Bargaining**

Unsurprisingly, bargaining toward the 2015-18 Collective Agreement was the topic of extensive discussion at all levels including Steward's Council, Executive, and General Meetings. In addition to receiving regular updates on the progress of discussions from the Bargaining Team, stewards and members of the Executive discussed communications strategy and the formation of a Bargaining Support Committee, which resulted in a series of background papers on specific bargaining priorities and information sheets on bargaining progress. Strategies for intensifying the pace of bargaining were debated in both General Meetings and among the Executive, resulting in consecutive decisions to seek conciliation, file a no-board report, and seek authorization for a strike vote from the membership. These moves produced a tentative agreement on February 8, 2016, ten months after the commencement of bargaining but less than two months after the application for conciliation. The new Collective Agreement was ratified on February 24.

## **2. Collegial governance**

Strengthening collegial governance was one of the principal bargaining priorities, and a number of problems resulting from the erosion of collegial governance were raised at both Stewards Council and Executive Committee meetings. Decanal interference in hiring and a protocol for CRC hires that gives decision-making power to higher levels of administration were most frequently invoked. The uneven distribution of new hires across faculties was also noted, and questions were raised about how YUFA could work to ensure greater fairness.

Stewards Council also repeatedly raised member concerns with the difficulty of processing reimbursements through the online Concur system and irritations with what appear to be excessive, arbitrary, and time-consuming demands for documentation of expenses from York Finance.

## **3. University Planning Processes**

The Academic and Administrative Program Review (AAPR) claimed much of YUFA's attention in 2014-15. Although the employer deemed this process to have been concluded by the end of that year, other planning processes related to and flowing from AAPR remained subjects of concern. The Executive Committee discussed the Institutional Integrated Resource Plan (IIRP) and the SHARP budget model on several occasions, and the LRP representative to the JCOAA was charged with producing a report on the former. Concerns with lack of transparency around planning for the new Markham Campus were also voiced, resulting in a July 2015 Freedom of Information application to the province. The information received was subsequently distributed to the membership.

## **4. Equity**

The question of which demographic should be used to determine an appropriate target percentage for representation of visible minority/racialized faculty, national or GTA, was raised in Stewards Council. Despite YUFA's advocacy in bargaining for a 30% threshold for visible minority/racialized faculty in hiring units, only a 20% target was achieved. The Race Equity Caucus also asked YUFA to press the employer to articulate a policy of no tolerance for racism and sexism on campus. The procedures for appointment of YUFA members to JCAA were also clarified.

## **5. Divestment**

A request for YUFA to endorse the YU Divest campaign calling for the permanent divestment of weapons manufacturers from the York University endowment fund's holdings generated some controversy in Stewards Council because one of the other endorsing organizations participates in the BDS (Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions) movement against Israel. This was resolved by the passage of a motion

endorsing the campaign with a preamble noting that the campaign is not directed at any state or any state's weapons manufacturers in particular but rather at the industry in general.

## **Other Matters and Recommendations**

### **1. Equity concerns**

The Trustees encourage the Association to reformulate and publish its own policy on representation of visible minority/racialized faculty, including the identification of percentage targets to guide future hiring that reflect York's population. We also encourage the Association to develop appropriate language for recognizing and addressing discrimination against faculty on grounds of race/ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and disability as a matter of policy.

### **2. Engagement with university governance and long-range planning**

Noting that YUFA was unsuccessful in securing restoration of collegial governance in the recent bargaining round, the Trustees urge YUFA to pursue the issue of collegial governance outside of collective bargaining, in particular advocating energetically for open decanal searches and unit autonomy in hiring decisions.

We also encourage the Association to engage systematically with university planning processes, including not only IIRP and the roll-out of the SHARP budget model and the Markham Campus, but also the development of the University Academic Plan and similar high-level planning documents in the future. This engagement might include striking a new standing committee on 'Policy, Governance and Planning.' Such a committee could, as a matter of course, support the Long Range Planning committee in its consultations with the employer, produce regular policy briefs on planning processes currently underway, and articulate and advocate for alternative visions of the university's future among the membership and to the employer.

### **3. Faculty Club**

The Association is encouraged to expedite progress on the reopening of the Faculty Club.

## **Financial Statements and Auditors' Report**

YUFA's financial affairs continue to be appropriately managed by the Association's officers. The Trustees are pleased to announce that this year's Auditors' report (September 16, 2015) resulted in a 'clean audit opinion' from YUFA's accountants. Investment income this year yielded small increases in the Defence Fund and

Arbitration Fund; the contributions and balances satisfy the requirements of the Association's accounting policy (§1a).

In 2014 YUFA's deficit was \$214,600. This year the situation is significantly improved, with the Association recording a deficit of \$40,000. The cause of the deficit remains the same: costs due to severance and retirement payouts to YUFA staff. These costs are projected to decline steeply over the period 2016-2018.

The Auditors recommended that the accounting procedures be revised, in the interests of transparency and timely information, to require that the Treasurer receive a reporting package monthly as opposed to quarterly. This change was implemented in November 2015.

Top-up course releases and stipends for executive positions have been reduced; it is projected that this will save YUFA approximately \$70,000 in 2016.

The Trustees recommend the following:

1. In view of the balance of Accounts Payable, the trustees recommend that YUFA continue to encourage executive officers who have banked course releases or stipends to use these as soon as reasonably practicable.
2. Since the Operating Fund has experienced moderate depletion over the last five years, the Trustees recommend that YUFA consider a budget line targeted to restore the Operating Fund to its long-term average.
3. In line with the auditor's recommendations and in regard to Recommendation (2) above, the Trustees propose that YUFA consider a fractional reduction of its cash holdings in the Operating Fund and the transferal of some of these monies into interest yielding accounts.

Respectfully submitted,

Carlota McAllister  
Robert Tordoff