

# Report on a Survey of Workload Issues

## By YUFA Stewards' Council

### The Survey

On 2 November 2012, YUFA's Stewards' Council voted unanimously to undertake a survey of workload issues across the university. Stewards were encouraged to hold meetings of the members of their units, using a common set of questions, and to report back by the December Council meeting. The results were uneven, but impressive. At least 15 units held meetings, and a total of 22 eventually sent in written reports. This feedback is summarized below. It is worth noting that the fullest responses came from LAPS, where most faculty have a 2.5 teaching load and therefore feel the weight of increasing workload more intensely.

Following the December Council meeting, a form was also circulated to all stewards asking for specific information on the impact of Appendix P. The results from 41 teaching units are reported in the attached Table.

Overall, the survey has revealed that full-time faculty at York are experiencing a significant increase in their workload in many forms and a deterioration in administrative support and in appropriate compensation for heavier service work. We also note that, while the new managerialism that lies behind these changes is university-wide, some faculties have experienced more intense pressures in recent years, notably Liberal Arts and Professional Studies (LAPS) and Health.

### Impact of Appendix P

Stewards from 41 units reported on administrative course releases under the new Appendix P in the latest YUFA Collective Agreement. The changes for ORUs have been added.

#### Course Releases (0.5)

|                                 | Loss | Gain |
|---------------------------------|------|------|
| Chairs/Directors                | 7    | 1    |
| Undergraduate Program Directors | 7    | 3    |
| Graduate Program Directors      | 6    | 3    |
| Coordinators                    | 34   |      |
| ORU Directors                   | 28   |      |
| Total                           | 82   | 7    |

In total, the reduction and elimination of course releases under Appendix P will hit at least 53 faculty in teaching units across the university each year, and another 28 who direct ORUs. Only 7 positions saw a 0.5 course increase. The impact seems to have been greatest on two kinds of positions – unit directors and program or area coordinators. Course releases for UPDs and/or GPDs were reduced by 0.5 in Nursing, LAPS Equity Studies, History, Political Science, Social Work, and the School of Women’s Studies. Chairs in LAPS Geography, Social Science, Social Work, Sociology, and the School of Women’s Studies had 0.5 reductions. All ORU directors’ releases were also cut from 1.5 to 1.0. Two large units (LAPS Political Science and Sociology) lost 0.5 releases for their associate chair positions. The most devastating hits, however, came with the elimination of 0.5 course releases for a variety of coordinators: 1 in LAPS DLLL; 1 in LAPS Philosophy; 1 in LAPS Political Science; 1 in LAPS Sociology; 2 in Kinesiology and Health Sciences; 3 in Music; 4 in LAPS Humanities; 4 in LAPS Social Science; 4 in Mathematics; 4 in the School of Women’s Studies; and 12 in LAPS Administrative Studies. This list does not include the areas within units and the many interdisciplinary programs that have long believed their coordinators deserve course credit for the work they do. Preliminary reports suggest that, not surprisingly, units that have lost these course releases are encountering difficulty in recruiting anyone to take the positions. The survey did not include journal editors who have lost their course releases as well.

Although the new Collective Agreement still allows deans to increase course releases (Article 8.16), the message has been delivered in LAPS that this will almost never happen. Units are being encouraged to create new positions with small stipends rather than course releases. In practice, it seems that the work of already heavily burdened, and now under-compensated people (especially UPDs and GPDs) will be spread around to other colleagues who will get no compensation. The result will be an overall increase in the average workload of faculty members.

The results of this survey suggest that the impact of the changes introduced under Appendix P has been to seriously undervalue the considerable amount of work that is involved in academic administration and to assume that financial compensation in the form of increased stipends is adequate incentive and reward for people taking on these positions. The new arrangements have not only denied many faculty the customary release from teaching for this work, but have also devalued the work by establishing stipends that are still far less than the cost of hiring a replacement at CUPE rates.

It is also worth noting that under Article 18.15 (a) of the Collective Agreement, the employer offers 60 research half-course releases per year. Under the new Appendix P, the units surveyed here have lost 82.

### **Workload Documents**

Despite their status under the Collective Agreement, workload documents do not seem to be providing any regular framework for decision-making about workload. Almost everywhere across the campus there is confusion and uncertainty about their status. In many cases they seem to be stalled in limbo, usually at the decanal level. Thus a large proportion of units,

including all in LAPS, do not yet have approved workload documents. Most of these documents do not cover Appendix P releases.

### **New Workload Demands**

YUFA members highlighted several new workload demands that have been appearing in recent years.

- Rising student enrolments and class sizes in many units (e.g., Chemistry, Nursing, Public Policy and Administration); in units with no graduate programs, there is often no TA help in large classes (e.g., Nursing). One report from Fine Arts was particularly telling: “One colleague reported the number of students he taught per year in 1987, and realized (in 1997) that the number had doubled. When he counted again in 2007, he found he was now teaching twice as many again, despite a nominal workload decrease of 0.5.”
- Graduate supervision: increased numbers (considerable in some cases over the past few years) mean more time grading students in large graduate seminars, advising students, supervising theses and dissertations, and sitting on supervisory committees; in science units, the encouragement to be more research-active invariably involves supervising more graduate students.
- Additional work in handling student accommodations and inadequate support from student services on campus.
- Increased work of teaching undergraduate students poorly prepared for university-level work (including escalating levels of plagiarism).
- Digitization and “blended” learning: more work in introducing and maintaining Moodle and other digital aids to pedagogy.
- More pressure to introduce forms of “experiential education.”
- More pressure to “internationalize,” including organizing student exchanges.
- Pressure to develop on-line courses (in Administrative Studies, faculty have been urged to develop them with a stipend but no course release; so far, no one has agreed to accept this proposal).
- Hiring procedures: much more paperwork and more complicated interactions with deans’ offices; also more work arising from the increasing number of searches for CLAs rather than tenure-stream positions.
- More bureaucratic reporting, demands for accountability, and procedural detail in teaching, research, and service work.

- Increased committee work for individual faculty members as unit cohorts shrink and units get more CLAs, who typically do not do service work.
- Increased demands on chairs, UPDs, and GPDs from deans' office and elsewhere to report and participate in non-collegial, often hasty consultation exercises.

### **Support Staff**

- There were numerous reports of understaffing in relation to the needs of units (e.g., IT support), too frequent turnover of staff, and some indication of a reduction in tasks that staff can perform for faculty (e.g., supervising make-up exams, advising). There is a general sense of a long-term shift of administrative work onto individual faculty members.
- Decreased support for grant-writing (Geography).
- Librarians report a particularly serious deterioration in staff support, and an increase in clerical work for department heads, comparable to what is happening to unit chairs and directors.
- YUSA staff are experiencing major shifts in their responsibilities and reporting responsibilities. The most disturbing has been the downgrading of administrative assistants by removing their budgetary and supervisory duties. The introduction of operations managers to oversee unit staff is a troubling prospect (already experienced in Nursing). Amidst all these changes, the chairs and directors have had to take on more work of supervising and reporting on staff, and, along with UPDs and GPDs, have had to deal with a serious morale crisis among staff.

### **Allocating Teaching Assignments**

Mostly chairs and directors assign annual teaching loads in consultation with individual faculty. There were few problems reported in this process. This year the LAPS dean is taking over responsibility for assigning teaching responsibilities. The outcome of that intervention is awaited unenthusiastically.

### **Banking Courses**

In addition to inaccuracies in ARMS, the main problems have been an insistence in Nursing that no banking will be possible in the future and in LAPS that banked teaching credits be used up or bought out immediately. This introduced some chaos into curriculum planning.

## **Balancing Teaching, Research, and Service**

There was almost universal feeling that this balance is getting more difficult and that research may suffer in many cases.

- Pressure to handle more students.
- Pressure to introduce digital technology in teaching
- Pressure to apply for research grants
- Pressure to take on more service, especially the heavier expectations of committee work, as a result of increased reporting and accountability measures

## **Dean's Office Intervention**

As one report said, "The level of intervention seems to increase more and more." Another referred to "Panopticon intrusion."

- Closer scrutiny (with dean's reps) and intervention into hiring processes to overturn collegial decisions.
- Turning back of collegial T&P decisions.
- Interference in collegial selection of UPDs and GPDs.
- Allocation of teaching assignments (LAPS).
- Resisting teaching on overload (e.g., PPA, Social Science).
- Imposing a culture of silence on unit chairs to prevent reporting back to units (LAPS).

## **Other Issues**

- 2.5 teaching load: should be reduced to 2.0.
- Alternate Stream workload: there is great variation and uncertainty in workload expectations.
- CLAs: increased workload.

## Impact of Appendix P

|                               | Chair/Director |                  | UPD    |       | GPD    |       | Coordinators |       | Total Changes |
|-------------------------------|----------------|------------------|--------|-------|--------|-------|--------------|-------|---------------|
|                               | Before         | After            | Before | After | Before | After | Before       | After |               |
| Environmental Studies         | n/a            | a/a              | 0.5    | 0.5   | 1      | 1.5   | 0.5/1        | 0.5/1 | + 0.5         |
| FA Music                      | 2.0            | 2.0              | 0.5    | 0.5   | 1.0    | 1.0   | 1.5          | 0.0   | - 1.5         |
| FSE Chemistry                 | 1.5            | 1.5              | 1.0    | 1.0   | 1.0    | 1.0   |              |       | 0             |
| FSE Computer Science          | 1.5            | 1.0 <sup>1</sup> | 1.0    | 1.0   | 1.0    | 1.0   | 0.5          | 0.5   | - 0.5         |
| FSE Mathematics & Statistics  | 1.5            | 1.5              | .5     | 1.0   | 1.0    | 1.0   | .5 x 4       | 0     | - 1.5         |
| FSE Physics & Astronomy       | 0.5            | 1.0 <sup>2</sup> | 0      | 0     | 0.5    | 1.0   |              |       | + 1.0         |
| FSE Natural Science           | 1.5            | 1.5              | 0      | 0     | 1.0    | 1.0   |              |       | 0             |
| Glendon French                | 1.0            | 1.0              |        |       |        |       |              |       | 0             |
| Glendon English               | 1.0            | 1.0              |        |       |        |       | 0.5 x2       | 0     | - 1.0         |
| Glendon Hispanic Studies      | 1.0            | 1.0              |        |       |        |       |              |       | 0             |
| Glendon Multidisciplinary     | 1.0            | 1.0              |        |       |        |       | 0.5          | 0     | - 0.5         |
| Glendon Philosophy            | 1.0            | 1.0              |        |       |        |       |              |       | 0             |
| Glendon Translation           | 1.0            | 1.0              |        |       |        |       |              |       | 0             |
| Glendon History               | 1.0            | 1.0              |        |       |        |       |              |       | 0             |
| Glendon Economics             | 1.0            | 1.0              |        |       |        |       |              |       | 0             |
| Glendon Political Science     | 1.0            | 1.0              |        |       |        |       |              |       | 0             |
| Glendon International Studies | 1.0            | 1.0              |        |       |        |       |              |       | 0             |
| Glendon Sociology             | 1.0            | 1.0              |        |       |        |       |              |       | 0             |
| Glendon                       | 1.0            | 1.0              |        |       |        |       |              |       | 0             |

<sup>1</sup> Majors/FFTEs have dropped over last few years

<sup>2</sup> Though the chair of PHAS technically acts as UPD, devoting a great deal of time and attention to UPD-like activities, the Faculty (FSE) has insisted and continues to insist that PHAS has no UPD.

|                                      |      |     |     |                  |     |     |                            |        |       |
|--------------------------------------|------|-----|-----|------------------|-----|-----|----------------------------|--------|-------|
| Psychology                           |      |     |     |                  |     |     |                            |        |       |
| Glendon Mathematics                  | 1.0  | 1.0 |     |                  |     |     |                            |        | 0     |
| Health Kinesiology & Health Sciences | 1.5  | 1.5 | 1.3 | 1.5              | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.5 x 2                    | 0.0    | - 1.0 |
| Health Health Policy & Management    |      |     | 1.0 | 1.0              |     |     |                            |        | 0     |
| Health Nursing                       | 2.0? | ?   | 1.5 | 1.0              | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.5                        | 0.5    | - 0.5 |
| Health Psychology                    | 1.5  | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5              | 1.5 | 1.5 |                            |        | 0     |
| LA&PS Administrative Studies         |      |     |     |                  |     |     | 12 x 0.5                   | 0      | - 6.0 |
| LA&PS Anthropology                   | 1.0  | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0              | 1.0 | 1.0 |                            |        | 0     |
| LA&PS Information Technology         | 1.0  | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0              |     |     |                            |        | 0     |
| LA&PS Economics                      | 1.5  | 1.5 | 1.0 | 1.5              | 1.0 | 1.0 |                            |        | + 0.5 |
| LA&PS English                        | 1.5  | 1.5 | 1.0 | 1.5 <sup>3</sup> | 1.0 | 1.5 | 0.5                        | 0      | + 0.5 |
| LA&PS Equity Studies                 | 1.0  | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.5              | N/A | N/A | 0 <sup>4</sup>             | 0      | - 0.5 |
| LA&PS Women's Studies                | 1.5  | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.5              | 1.5 | 1.0 | 0.5 x 3 + 0.5 <sup>5</sup> | 0<br>0 | - 3.5 |
| LA&PS French Studies                 | 1.5  | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.5              | 1.0 | 1.0 |                            |        | - 1.0 |
| LA&PS Geography                      | 1.5  | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0              | 1.0 | 1.0 |                            |        | - 0.5 |
| LA&PS History                        | 1.5  | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.0              | 1.5 | 1.0 |                            |        | - 1.0 |
| LA&PS Humanities                     | 1.5  | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5              | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.5 <sup>6</sup>           | 1.5    | - 1.0 |
| LA&PS                                | 1.5  | 1.5 | 1.0 | 1.0              | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.5                        | 0.5    | 0     |

<sup>3</sup> English is about to become an “extra large” department.

<sup>4</sup> Three years ago, ES had a 0.5 course release for PC for one year, but it was withdrawn the following year.

<sup>5</sup> GSWS has an Academic Advisor whose course release/job description is under review and therefore, likely to be withdrawn as well

<sup>6</sup> Children’s studies 0.5 -> 1.0; Culture and Expression, 0.5 -> 0; Gen Ed and Foundations, 0.5 -> 0.5; Modes of Reasoning, 0.5 -> ? (moving to Philosophy next year); ; Religious Studies, 0.5 -> 0.

|  |                  |     |     |     |     |     |                   |     |       |
|--|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------------------|-----|-------|
| Languages,<br>Literatures &<br>Linguistics |                  |     |     |     |     |     |                   |     |       |
| LA&PS<br>Philosophy                        | 1.5              | 1.5 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.5               | 0   | - 0.5 |
| LA&PS<br>Political Science                 | 1.5 <sup>7</sup> | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.0 | 1.5 | 1.0 | 0.5 <sup>8</sup>  | 0   | - 2.5 |
| LA&PS<br>Social Science                    | 2.0              | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 2.0 | 1.5 | 6.0 <sup>9</sup>  | 4.0 | - 2.5 |
| LA&PS<br>Social Work                       | 1.5              | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.5 | 1.0 |                   |     | - 1.0 |
| LA&PS<br>Sociology                         | 2.0              | 1.5 | 2.0 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.0 | 1.5 <sup>10</sup> | 0   | - 3.0 |

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<sup>7</sup> Associate Chair: 1.0 -> 0

<sup>8</sup> MA coordinator

<sup>9</sup> 12 interdisciplinary coordinators

<sup>10</sup> Associate chair, 0.5 -> 0; Associate GPD, 0.5 -> 0; Undergraduate Program Coordinator, 0.5 -> 0