

We are in a period where it is important for YUFA to have experienced leadership. Having served on the YUFA Executive from 2001-2003 as Recording Secretary, from 2003–2014 as President, from 2014-2016 as Past President, and from 2018- 2020 as Recording Secretary I am well positioned to provide this experienced leadership. In addition, I am currently nearing the end of an additional term as President. This most recent experience as a member of the YUFA Executive provides me with an updated understanding of the current issues and concerns facing YUFA members and serves as preparation for what will be a difficult period ahead. Among the many issues we are facing are shifts towards increased online teaching, a provincial government that emphasizes performance-based funding, an increasing rise in contract work, increased managerialism and various governance issues, as well as serious budgetary implications of the current COVID-19 crisis on top of funding cuts previously imposed by the provincial government on universities. Equity and accommodation concerns are of particular importance.

I also have extensive experience relating to pension issues and pension reform which will enable me to work with others with expertise on these critical issues. I worked well with YUFA members and with our pension lawyer and actuary and representatives of the other unions on campus.

Collective bargaining is taking place in an environment that has changed dramatically. As President of YUFA I was responsible for drafting primary negotiating positions for three collective agreements in addition to overseeing bargaining, which will be valuable experience as we move into the next round of collective bargaining. I was a major participant in drafting the proposals for the Collective Agreement that are currently being negotiated with the university administration.

My knowledge of the collective agreement and the grievance process will also be valuable as we navigate a period of increasing uncertainty for YUFA members in an environment of increased administrative oversight. I served as Grievance Officer for the University of Guelph Faculty Association before coming to York University as Professor and Chair of the Department of Biology in 2000. At York I led a major reform of the grievance process. I have also been involved indirectly and occasionally directly in many complaints, grievances and arbitrations at York as well as research misconduct hearings for YUFA members. At a time where academic freedom is under threat upholding the rights of YUFA members under the collective agreement is paramount.

I believe that I have important strengths in addition to experience that will allow me to navigate the next difficult and uncertain period, which include an ability to work collegially, a respect for process, a respect for different points of view and voices, an appreciation for the diversity of YUFA members and the different groups that together comprise the YUFA membership and a consequent commitment to issues of equity and inclusion.