

Newsbreak

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February 2015

“Top employer” Humber College cheats faculty with two-year Master’s degrees

Bob Bolf, Secretary, OPSEU Local 562

If you are a full-time or partial-load faculty member with a Master’s degree, you will be interested in this article.

According to our collective agreement (CA), faculty with a two-year Master’s Degree should be given three points when the college calculates their starting salary (see NOTE 1 on page 12). It appears that Humber College is the only college in the province that does not follow the CA when calculating a new employee’s (professor, counsellor or librarian) starting salary grade. This means the college is not paying what has been agreed to between The College Employer Council and the Ontario Public Service Employees Union.

What does this mean to you?

It means that you have been shortchanged by one or two salary steps in your starting salary (or pay rate if you are partial-load). As a full-time employee, you have been and will continue to be short-changed on your salary as you progress and then reach the final step of the salary scale (step 21).

One salary step equals \$2,600. Assuming a starting salary that is only one step below what you should be paid, this is \$2,600 you are missing from your pay, every year, until you

reach Step 21. So, for example, if your initial starting grade calculated by the college is Step 15, you will miss out on 6 years (21 minus 15) salary increment of \$2,600, or \$15,600 (not including interest). This also has an impact on your pension. If your starting salary grade was two levels below what you should have been paid, the amount doubles. Please see the note at the end of the article for the actual wording in the CA. There are similar implications for partial-load hourly rates.

This miscalculation is not an accident. Your Humber faculty union has repeatedly drawn Humber’s attention to this situation, and the college has consistently refused to change how it calculates starting salary. In fact, your Humber faculty union has had to grieve this decision, and the issue is now currently in arbitration with the second session set for late March of this year.

The college has stated that it needs room in the salary grade to accommodate new PhD faculty hires. To this, I draw your attention to NOTE 2 at the end of the article that gives the allowance for the college to accommodate newly hired PhD faculty by awarding them additional salary steps. Read NOTE 2 carefully.

Inside this issue:

Did you know	2	Black Canadian history	8
Workload Monitoring	6	Save door-to-door mail.	9
Partial-load faculty	7	Humber gives.	10

Did you know?

College administrators with salaries over \$150,000 per year, in addition to the regular CAAT pension plan, enjoy a supplementary pension.

The Retirement Compensation Arrangement (RCA) provides supplementary post-retirement pension benefits. Under this arrangement seventy-five per cent of these benefits will be paid for by student tuition and/or taxpayers' money.

And it gets worse...

Watch for more details in the next Newsbreak!

Send confidential comments or questions about Humber's RCA for senior administrators to **plumpnests@gmail.com**.

Newsbreak is a publication of the Humber College Faculty Union, OPSEU Local 562, intended to provide information and stimulate discussion. We invite your participation and welcome your contributions. All articles and letters should be signed, though in some circumstances the author's name will be withheld upon request. We encourage thoughtful discussion that respects human rights. We reserve the right to edit for libel, length, and clarity.

Articles reporting on union business will be signed and will include the author's position of responsibility in the local. Where an article has the author's name only, the views are those of the author. You may e-mail the editor: sylvia.ciuciura@humber.ca or drop materials at the Faculty Union office – Portable PX, North Campus, ext. 4007.

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President's notes

Audrey Taves, President, OPSEU Local 562

Employee engagement survey results



I hope everyone enjoyed the Family Day holiday this past week. How wonderful to have an extra day off in February to enjoy cold weather activities with family ... or to dream of warmer days ahead.

As we return to the second half of the winter term, the college is setting up Town Hall meetings to report on the 2014 Employee Engagement Survey results. Given the high overall participation rate in the survey, I am very interested in hearing about what is working well, as well as hearing about what areas of work life at Humber have been identified as needing improvement by the faculty. The president has been clear that the good and bad will be reported so that improvements can be made. I encourage everyone to get out to one of the college-wide sessions on March 3 or 5 and also to your school meetings when those are set up. Let's acknowledge what is working well and encourage management to address problem area. We know anecdotally that there are significant issues, particularly in certain areas of the college and the union needs to be involved in suggesting solutions. We have a new VP Academic and a (quite) new college President who can really turn this place around. Humber is, after all, OUR college.

January and February have been particularly busy months in your faculty union office, as we work to improve faculty staffing at Humber. Please read our Chief Steward's report in this edition of Newsbreak on the current staffing arbitrations. The need for a significant increase in numbers of full-time faculty is clearly shown in the documents we have prepared for the arbitrations. It is

unfortunate that the college engages high-priced lawyers to fight against the facts we present, rather than working with us to develop an appropriate and fiscally responsible plan for increasing full-time complement, drawing from our experienced and competent partial-load faculty group.

In addition to fighting for an increased full-time complement of faculty, your union local is also meeting with management to find ways to improve the lives of partial-load faculty who work for Humber. We have approximately 700 partial-load faculty this term. Many of these Humber faculty, who have been teaching here for years have no job security - even from term to term. How many work almost full-time hours, yet do not make enough money to live comfortably in Toronto? How many of these faculty have paid time to meet with their students? To participate in faculty meetings? To mark their final exams?

There are many simple, **no-cost** strategies that could be implemented immediately to give these faculty members a significant degree of job and income security. There are also simple, **low-cost** strategies that could be implemented quickly to pay them for work that must be done yet isn't covered by "teaching contact" hours. If they truly are an important part of "WE ARE HUMBER", it's time to adopt some or all of these measures.

Thoughts? Ideas? Please get in touch, I'd love to hear from you.

Sincerely,

Audrey

audreyt@humberfacultyunion.org

DEGREES from page 1

The other reason given by the college in the first arbitration meeting is that they have consistently calculated starting salary steps this way. So, it seems that their excuse is “we’ve always done it that way, why change now?”. Applying this college approved logic in the classroom would mean that when a student gives you this excuse for something they have done that was incorrect or inappropriate, we should accept it.

Yet another excuse the college has used is that the second year of a two-year Masters degree does not build on the first year of study; the college claims the courses in the second year are at the same level as the courses in the first year. I strongly suspect that the college does not have any research based evidence to support this argument. Even so, there is absolutely no language in the CA that justifies this argument.

The question that has arisen for me is that if Humber College is trying to create an innovative, motivated and leading educational institution, how is this a best practice of a “Top GTA Employer” (as Humber likes to call itself)? It seems to me that this practice is directly opposite to the espoused intentions of the college.

Remember, the reason the college exists is to develop the skills and knowledge of our students. The students pay fees and the Ministry funds the college to allow students to have access to faculty. Faculty deliver the purpose of the college. The only source of revenue for the College is the faculty. Faculty are the ONLY revenue producing asset the College has. With no faculty, there is no college.

Where in the college was the decision made to short-change the salaries of faculty with Master’s degrees? Why are our educated professors, counsellors and librarians so disrespected?

What the college should do immediately is to recalculate ALL starting salary grades and then fully pay you back-salaries that are owed to you for each and every year missed, including interest. And top up each affected faculty’s pension by contributing the full amount of employer and employee contributions over the same period of time. All this will do is correct the situation to what every other college in the province is already doing. Furthermore, think about this. If you were to short change Revenue Canada for \$2,600 a year for five years, would they only expect you to pay back two years of tax owed? Would they only charge you for the five years you owe without interest? No, in addition to full payment of monies owing, plus interest, they would also require you to pay a fine, whether or not you had short-changed them intentionally or by mistake.

Unfortunately, I doubt the college will fine itself, and there is no external entity to which the college is accountable in this matter. Maybe there should be no tuition increases for a year or two?

Anything less is not making full restitution for not adhering to our Collective Agreement and is disrespecting the members of the Humber Faculty Union.

If you are upset by this situation, as I believe you should be, there are a couple of things you can do.

The following realistically should only be done by full-time faculty who are off probation.

DEGREES continued on page 12

Chief Steward's report

Robert Mills, Chief Steward, OPSEU Local 562



Good news

Grievance report

The present collective agreement bars the union from filing staffing grievances for the next three years; however, we had filed a number prior to the last negotiations.

There are six arbitration hearings scheduled, four in February and two in March. These are in the schools of Applied Technology, Liberal Arts and Sciences, Media Studies, Business, Creative and Performing Arts, and Hospitality, Recreation and Tourism.

1. Grievances

- a) Individual;
 - unfair discipline
 - unfair dismissal.
- b) Union;
 - a job posting in support staff for a placement advisor who has responsibilities for supervision of students who are on placement. The issue here is that the evaluation of the student is normally a faculty job.
 - a program coordinator posting which includes administrative functions in the job description.

2. Arbitrations

- staffing SAT—settled for 14 positions
- staffing LAS, Media, Business, SCAPA, HRT
- salary—Masters' degree step calculation
- discipline
- failure to ensure union representation at discipline meetings.

Good News

The last decade has seen constant attacks on

organized labour such as Hudak's threat to lay off (fire) 10,000 public employees and Ottawa rolling over collective agreement negotiations with abandon. The last month has brought some good news from the Supreme Court. First, there was the award that gave the RCMP the right to have collective bargaining with the government.

In the 1960s, they were excluded from the legislation that gave other federal public employees the right to bargain, and that separation has been maintained up till now. The Supreme Court maintained that the "freedom of association" in the Canadian of Rights and Freedoms (the Charter) includes the idea that any association that represents employee has bargaining rights and that the employer must recognize those.

The second decision was a result of the Saskatchewan government designating, without discussion, a large number of employees with essential service employee status, thereby favouring the government (essential service employees do not have the right to strike). The Supreme Court ruled that the right to strike is protected under the Charter. The ruling stated that the right to strike is an essential part of the bargaining process because it promotes equality in the process. It also confirmed that

"This collective action at the moment of impasse is an affirmation of the dignity and autonomy of employees in their working lives."

These two decisions are a sea change for government employees. Restrictions are now placed on the governments' powers in their dealings with public service workers. 🇺🇸

Workload Monitoring Group

Stacey Merritt, Co-chair, Workload Monitoring Group



Many full-time teaching faculty may not be aware that a committee exists at Humber College to assist them when they believe that the workload they have been assigned on their SWF is not correct. The committee is called the Workload Monitoring Group or WMG. The committee consists of eight members – four from the union and four from management and it meets once a month during the fall and winter semesters. Presently, our union local is represented by Bob Bolf, Janet Porter, Audrey Taves and me as co-chair. The management members are Sheila West-Merker (co-chair), Paula Gouveia, Christy Lihou and Peter Madott.

The functions of the Workload Monitoring Group are described in Article 11.02 C1 of the collective agreement (a copy of the contract is available at www.humberfacultyunion.org/contract). These functions fall into two main areas:

1. To provide a fair hearing when a teaching faculty member believes that work assigned on his/her SWF is not appropriate and discussions with the faculty's supervisor have not resolved the issue(s). Article 11.02 A1 (b) states that a teacher has the right to refer any matter regarding the teacher's workload to the Workload Monitoring Group. Articles 11.02 A3 and A4 thoroughly describe the referral process. When this occurs, the WMG convenes a hearing with the faculty and the supervisor and attempts to resolve the issue(s). If the committee cannot reach an agreement, the teacher has the right for the concern(s) to be referred to a Work-

load Arbitrator.

Please read Articles

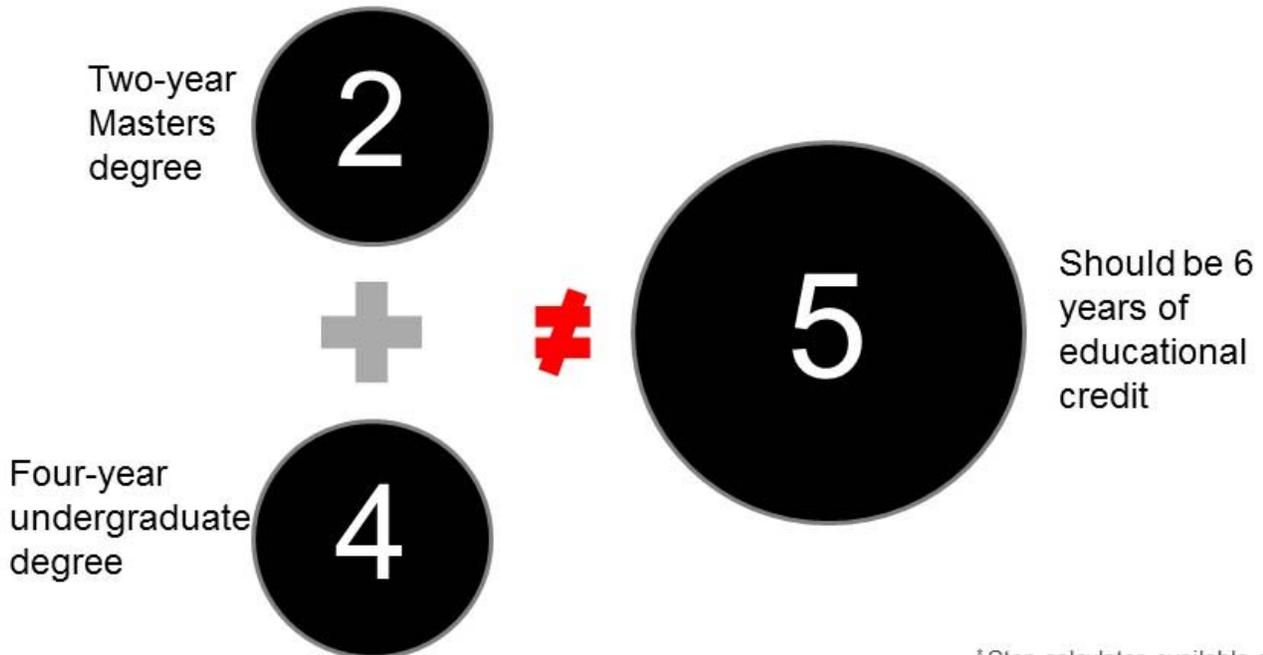
11.02 D 1 – 11.02 E 2 for a full outline of the workload complaint process.

2. More broadly, the WMG also reviews workload assignments 'in general' at the college with the goal of making recommendations to the college on workload assignments. An example of recent discussions at WMG meetings include the development of a reporting form when a faculty member voluntarily accepts a teaching day longer than eight hours in length. Upcoming issues that may be discussed include how to properly credit faculty for extra work created by students with disabilities, the variance in duties given to program co-ordinators in different schools, etc.

The overall role of the union members of the WMG is to ensure that management properly abides by the collective agreement when it comes to workload issues. If you have any concerns regarding the work you have been assigned, please contact any of the committee's union members and we will do our best to assist you.

Note: The WMG does not have jurisdiction over the workload of counsellors and librarians, nor over the workload of partial-load faculty. Therefore, the grievance process would need to be used to deal with any unresolved issues. Please contact your steward or the union office at ext. 4007 for assistance. 📧

Get the message out! Humber Faculty: check your step!*



* Step calculator available at www.humberfacultyunion.org

Questions? Comments? Concerns?
Email us confidentially at 2plus4isnot5@gmail.com

Partial-load faculty, are you missing out?

Have you signed up for your **FREE** Extended Health benefits from the college?

According to reports from the College Council, only about 70 per cent of our partial-load faculty at Humber are receiving the extended health benefits.

Are you one of the 30 per cent of partial-load faculty who are missing out on the following?:

- 85% coverage for prescription drugs
- 85% coverage for paramedical services (physio, massage, psychologist) up to a combined maximum of \$1,500/year

- 85% coverage for various nursing services
- semi-private hospital coverage
- 85% coverage for orthotic expenses
- co-ordinated coverage if you are covered under another plan

These benefits are available at no cost to you during your contract period, 100 per cent college paid.

If you have opted out of the benefits **in writing**, you must have a six month break between contracts before you can opt back in.

If you have any questions about your coverage, please call the faculty union office, ext 4007. 📞

Black Canadian history month - eh?

John Steckley, Professor, School of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Every Black History month, we see and hear a parade of African-Americans. That's not a bad thing in itself. Their stories are inspiring. But I want to experience more Black Canadian stories. A long, long time ago, when I was first at Humber College, I was teaching a course on multiculturalism. Wanting to include the Black history of Toronto, I used material from a book first published in 1849 that was like a phone book, but had an absence of phone numbers as there was an absence of phones. It did include names, addresses, occupations, and, if the person were African-Canadian, the word *coloured* written beside their name. In this way, I learned what occupations Black workers had in those days. A good number worked with tobacco, as they had previously lived (when they were slaves in the U.S.) in Virginia. Some drove hansom cabs which were horse-drawn carriages. I wrote about this and a few other aspects of Toronto Black history, and got it published in the *Etobicoke Guardian*. They referred to me as a Black historian who worked at Humber College.

I became interested in the Black history of the Maritime provinces as I had a Black student who was from Nova Scotia. People were always asking him "Where are you from?" and he would answer "Canada". That brought no satisfaction to the questioner. "No. Where are you *really* from?" This produced the even more frustrating answer "Nova Scotia." The questioner walked away unhappy. In the early 21st century, I edited a doctoral dissertation from a young African American, Harvey Amani Whitfield, that told the

fascinating story of Black runaway slaves from the U.S. coming to settle in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick during and just after the War of 1812. The British government had issued an invitation. The book title is *From American Slaves to Canadian Subjects: The Case of the Black Refugees 1813 – 1840* (Whitfield, 2004). There are two copies in the Humber library, one at the North, the other at Lakeshore

My favourite story is of Viola Desmond (1914-1965). She wanted to train as a beautician in Halifax, but was not allowed to so she went to Montreal and the U.S. for her education. When she returned to Halifax, she established a hair salon, a beauty school, and her own line of products "Vi's Beauty Products." One incident made her famous (but should have made her more famous). In 1946, her car broke down in New Glasgow, so she thought she would take in a movie. She paid for her ticket and proceeded to take a seat on the main floor. But that was for Whites only (unlike the balcony, where she did not want to sit). She was forcibly taken out of the theatre, jailed for a night and fined (for the 1¢ tax on the more expensive seat). She fought the case and lost. Eventually she left Canada for the apparently more tolerant city of New York.

There is a book about her written by her sister, Wanda Robson (and Ronald Caplan), entitled *Sister to Courage: Stories from the World of Viola Desmond, Canada's Rosa Parks* (2010). This is not in our library. 📖

Save door-to-door mail

Pam Johnson, Professor, School of Creative & Performing Arts

Saving door-to-door mail: public services and the question of democracy

The plan to end door-to-door postal delivery has been massively unpopular from the moment it was announced by Canada Post in December 2013. Sixty per cent of Canadians recently surveyed are opposed to the plan.

Despite Harper's claims that home delivery is obsolete and unaffordable, Canada Post is a success story. Since 2000, Canada Post has paid over \$1.5 billion to the federal government. Close to two thirds of households get home delivery. Ending home mail delivery is a major attack on a critical public service and is being carried out with no public consultation, a blow to the democratic process.

Harper's Slash and Burn

As well as losing the service, 8,000 jobs will be cut. Adding insult to injury, Harper's government is demonstrating no concern for the serious lack of accessibility to mail for seniors, people with disabilities and all those with mobility issues. Medical associations have expressed concerns at Canada Post's attempt to do damage control on accessibility to mail by forcing people to get doctor's notes if they require assistance or can't get to a community mailbox.

A major federal court challenge has been launched by the Canadian Union of Postal Workers and allies, such as The Disabled Women's Network and The National Pensioners. It argues that the drastic decisions re: elimination of door-to-door delivery are outside of the jurisdiction of Canada Post and must be made by Parliament, highlighting that Harper's government is ignoring the hardships and lack of a democratic process by ending

home delivery.

Community Mailbox roll-out: a disaster in Ontario

To date, the Community Mailbox (CMB) implementation to replace door-to-door mail delivery has been a disaster in Ontario. The hasty change was done with no public consultation and no planning. There are significant safety issues (and property damage) including increased parking congestion, no snow and litter removal, and access problems. In Oakville, Ontario mailboxes have frozen up in the cold and become inaccessible with people waiting for days to get their mail.

Save Canada Post campaign

The Save Canada Post campaign, launched by the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, has initiated actions in communities large and small across Canada and Quebec. To date, seventy municipalities have passed resolutions in support of postal workers and continuing door-to-door delivery, including Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Medicine Hat, Hamilton and Oakville.

"The public outcry began the moment these cuts were announced by Canada Post and approved by the Conservatives," said Denis Lemelin, National President of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW). "Lawn signs are going up all across the country. People are organizing. Municipalities are taking action."

A united campaign across Canada with the same sort of community and labour solidarity that defeated Hudak could turn the tide on this campaign, push back on the Harper austerity agenda and build the confidence and capacity of the labour movement. For information on the campaign: www.cupw.ca



Humber gives....

Robert Mills, Chief Steward, OPSEU Local 562

For me, the *Humber Gives* campaign is a bit odd. The white and blue heat sleeves for coffee and tea, as well as all the framed ads in the washrooms and toilet cubicles, encourage us to donate to "Help our students on the road to success." I guess management realize that if students are encumbered with a \$13,000 to \$15,000 dollar debt when they leave, they'll have problems establishing themselves. Since management constantly increases student tuition while creating a healthy surplus every

year, but doesn't want to do anything about the text-book costs, the multitude of ancillary costs, and so on, they have turned to us, the employees for donations.

In a strange way, that reminds me of Walmart putting out boxes for employees to make donations so that other employees (all under-paid) at Walmart could afford Thanksgiving - among other things. So we are now modelling our corporate selves on Walmart? 🚩



Up at the Board

by Franca Giacomelli, Board of Governors Faculty Representative

This article summarizes the highlights of the December 2 and January 27 Board of Governors meetings.

The Board has approved two Graduate Certificate programs:

The Entrepreneurship and New Enterprise Management Graduate Certificate is a one-year program offered by the Business School. The aim is to provide students with the core skills they need to develop start and/or manage a new enterprise or lead within a small or medium sized enterprise environment. The work component of the program provides students with an opportunity to gain practical experience as an entrepreneur and develop the expertise necessary to manage the day-to-day operation of a business. The program will provide students with the skills and training to pursue their passion and develop a tangible business model.

The Creative Music Business Graduate Certificate is a three-semester program offered by The School of Creative and Performing Arts. The program provides students with the foundational music business knowledge to work in any number of non-performance areas of the music industry. Ontario is home to Canada's largest and one of the world's most diversified music sectors, generating more than four hundred million dollars in revenue in 2011. Research indicates high student interest and demand, with no comparable graduate-level programs currently offered in North America at the college or university level.

Both programs provide students with membership and access to Humber Launch, the college's incubator run by the research department. To qualify, students must have an entrepreneurial idea that they would like to pursue. Humber Launch provides students with access to workshops, seminars, supports and services with mentors and other entrepreneurs



in order to enhance the likelihood of success of their new enterprise projects. The Board also supported the advancement of renovations to Building G at the Lake to create the Centre for Entrepreneurship.

Humber continues to have the strongest balance sheet in the system. With the winter term just starting, the college is anticipating that it will meet the budgeted enrolment numbers for the term putting the projected enrolment for the year to be overall lower by 2.3 per cent than budget. The base and growth grants are not impacted by the in-year enrolment numbers but the tuition fee revenue is projected to decline due to less than budgeted enrolment. The college is projecting an improved revenue outlook in the amount of \$5.7 million (or 1.5 per cent), as a result of receiving Special Purpose and Conditional Grants along with improvement of other revenue sources. The college is projecting total revenues in the amount of \$384.5 million; total expenses in the amount of \$370.9 million; and excess of revenue over expenses to be \$13.6 million for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2015. Even though the college is projecting this surplus, the following items can influence the exact year-end forecast amount:

- Winter term enrolment is different than the budgeted amount
- Final contribution amount from the University of Guelph-Humber
- Final level of expenditure spending

(See humber.ca/content/publications for financial statements.)

I would be happy to discuss the details of any of the Board meetings. 🙏

Keep up the good fight

Robert Mills, Chief Steward, OPSEU Local 562

In our roles as teachers, we encourage students to write simply because the main idea of a piece of writing is to inform the reader – ideally on the first reading. For example, they shouldn't use a four syllable word where a one syllable word will do, and they should state ideas clearly. Unfortunately, the college continues to undermine our work. Can someone please let us know what the following sentences, from a Humber school memo to faculty, actually mean? We welcome any interpretations. We have removed any identifiers that might cause embarrassment for the manager who actually wrote this...

“As you are all aware, our school has developed a collaborative, forward-thinking strategic plan that will progressively transform the learning journey for our students over the course of the next five years. Importantly, the overarching goals within our collective vision for _____ education are complemented, in a synergistic manner, by many of the priorities outlined in the 2013-2018 Humber College Strategic Plan.”

Unfortunately, the memo continues in a similar vein. 🗨️

DEGREES from page 4

First, ask the HR department to explain to you how your starting salary grade was determined. Ask to see the calculation they used. If they have only awarded you one year's credit for your two year Master's Degree, ask them to change this calculation and pay you your entire back pay owing, including pension contributions. Secondly, let your associate dean or dean know that you are disappointed that the college did not start you at the appropriate salary grade, and ask if they would advocate upwards for a change to this practice and restitution of your full back pay. Your academic chain of command probably are not the ones who decided on this practice.

I would like to hear about your experience when you attempt to fix this, or what you think about this situation. Let me know what happens. E-mail me, on a confidential basis, at “2plus4isnot5@gmail.com”. As well, please pass this along to those who may be interested in working as faculty at Humber College.

NOTES: Source: Academic Employees Collective Agreement; Sept. 1, 2014-Sept. 30, 2017

Excerpts From the Collective Agreement. (The calculation described in the current CA has not changed for several years.)

NOTE 1:
Section B) Relevant Formal Qualifications (page 118)
...”University Degree- per year (level) completed: 1 ½ points
(Maximum of 6 years)”...

NOTE 2:
2. Progression factors (page 119)
...”Special Note to Raters:
If a given individual's qualifications and experience are such that the college concerned considers that person to be particularly important to its program but the salary as established by the plan is inadequate, the college may grant up to three additional steps on appointment provided the resultant rate does not place the individual above the maximum salary.” 🗨️