

Newsbreak

Volume 25, Issue 5

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Do you have PR skills?

Spend an hour or two a week (or a term) helping to design and plan events to engage faculty.

Graphic design skills

Help us improve the look of our flyers, emails, website, and newsletter. An hour or two a week (or a term) could work.

Good with numbers?

Come work as our Assistant Treasurer to keep our books in order.

Want to make a difference in the lives of your colleagues?

Become a Steward!

Social media savvy

Help us develop our presence on Twitter and Facebook.

HELP WANTED

Do you have IT skills?

Become our new on-call IT Consultant .

Do you have a legal background?

Come and talk with us. We'd love to bounce some ideas around with you.

Have something to say? Good editing skills?

Come write or edit an article for Newsbreak – for each edition or as often as you like.

Believe in Equity ?

Join the Diversity & Equity Committee and work to make Humber a more inclusive environment.


Passionate about safety?

Join the Joint Workplace Health and Safety Committee. Be proactive about the safety of your colleagues and students.

Come and work with your faculty union officers and stewards on making our workplace more engaging, more responsive to faculty input, and more inclusive.

We need you to keep our union local strong so we can work with management to make Humber the best workplace for us and the best place for students to learn.

Come for a few hours a term, or commit to a few hours per week which will go on your SWF. Together we can achieve great things!

Contact us at 416-675-6622 ext 4007 or info@humberfacultyunion to talk about what you can do. 

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Why is this happening?

Robert Mills, Chief Steward, OPSEU Local 562

I recently attended the Mental Health First Aid workshop. The sign-up process was straightforward; however, on the sign-up page was a notice with this sentence: *Please note that all sign-ups need to be approved by your manager before your registration can be confirmed. Confirmations will be sent out later by HR.*

My question is *why?* Here I am registering for a course that Humber encourages everyone to take. So, why does it need my manager's approval? The same is true if I try to register for *Proofreading Skills, Enhancing Listening Skills, or Getting Restful Sleep - Lunch 'n Learn.*

I found that all courses offered by the Learning & Development department that require registration need my manager's approval. Again, *why?* Is the college so concerned with denying us academic freedom that it needs to approve any course that involves self-improvement also?

It used to be that if you wanted to attend a course and there was a conflict with classes or a meeting, you could just go to the manager to sort it out. That's the only reason to inform the manager of your desire to take a course. But now it's approval? I guess we can't be trusted to know what's best for us. 🚫

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



Faculty engagement

What does faculty engagement look like at Humber?

In the last Newsbreak, I wrote about the employee engagement survey results which suggested that:

- less than 20 per cent of all faculty at Humber feel even moderately engaged
- 40 per cent of those surveyed do not feel that their opinion or input are valued at Humber
- 30 per cent of those surveyed do not feel listened to in academic discussions or departmental decisions.

So what has been happening to improve faculty engagement since the survey results came out?

- The Humber Employee Engagements Steering Committee has 15 members
 - 3 full-time faculty plus 1 part-time faculty
 - 4 support staff
 - 7 administrators.
- The Ad Hoc Academic Planning Working Group has 16 members
 - 0 faculty
 - 16 administrators including
 - 9 deans/associate deans
 - 7 non-academic administrators.
- Many schools and programs have had meetings to outline survey results. How much faculty engagement took place in the meetings in your school? Are changes being made in your area? Are you being consulted? Please let us know what is hap-

pening in your area – increased or decreased engagement.

What else is going on?

- **Hiring committees for full-time faculty:** Interviews are now being held. If you sit on one of these committees, please note that the collective agreement and a Humber arbitration award clearly state that all **internal** applicants must **be considered** (including an interview) for any full-time posting **PRIOR** to any consideration of any external applicant.
- **Professional development days:** Will you get your ten days by June 26? What can be included in your PD? Here are some ideas:
 - learning new knowledge or skills associated with your courses
 - maintaining or updating your knowledge or skills
 - learning new IT programs to help deliver your courses
 - doing a library literature search
 - reading in your discipline or skills area
 - attending a seminar, webinar, course, workshop related to teaching and learning, or to your discipline.
- **Non-teaching periods (May-June for some):** Please note that there are no SWFs for non-teaching periods. Therefore, work cannot be assigned during non-teaching periods.

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Why I became active in the faculty union

Bob Bolf, Secretary, OPSEU Local 562

I arrived at Humber College after a 30-year business career and having come to realize that I loved teaching. Thriving on creative collaboration with colleagues and assisting others, I aimed to simplify my life and enjoy my love for educating.

My experience before Humber was as an entrepreneur and consultant, helping businesses become more successful. When I became a full-time professor at Humber, I wasn't planning to become active in the faculty union.

Initially, I was impressed by the commitment of the faculty and academic management to the learning experiences for our students. After one term as a faculty member, I became a program coordinator for a two-year diploma program. I honestly believed my experience and skills would be beneficial to both students and the college; solving problems and spurring innovative practices to make our students the recipients of a high quality education.

Unfortunately, what I actually learned over six years as a program coordinator is how little Humber values faculty, on a practical level. I ran into barrier after barrier and had demands placed upon me that detracted from offering my best to our students. I also observed a steady erosion of the rights of faculty and a reduction in the academic influence on teaching.

The academic influence is what we're all about. Or, should be.

In my experience at Humber, faculty are not systemically consulted on issues that affect student success. That has been completely usurped by the non-academic side of Humber. Token faculty representation on a few committees does not suffice.

So, I found that the only way to have the voice of faculty heard is through our Humber faculty union. The quality of working conditions for

faculty directly impacts the quality of our students' education.

What has surprised me (and it shouldn't have) is that some managers see their role as fighting what the "union" wants. It's "hold the line or the barbarians at the gate will run the place". Others seem to understand that we all want the same thing...the best education we can deliver to our students. While we may have differing perspectives, the union is not evil. Far, far from it.

There are signs that the old mentality is changing. I believe that over the next five years, we will see pressures and changes that we have never seen before. There are some signs that the college is aware that changes need to be made and that faculty need to be part of the solution. On the other hand, there are still remnants of the old mentality sprinkled throughout the college that, on principle, oppose everything the faculty union stands for.

As you work through the spring term, and prepare for the summer break, I suggest it is worthwhile giving some thought toward what might be in store for us in the future. I mentioned, at the outset, that the faculty are already not afforded sufficient input regarding matters affecting the quality of student education. At the next round of negotiations, it may be that the College Employer Council will attempt to further erode faculty rights, as well as demanding a reduction in pay rates, benefits, sick leave or job security.

If we wait until the next round of bargaining to advocate for ourselves, it will be too late. A strong and well-supported faculty union is one way to help prevent the degrading of our working conditions, while standing up for our current rights. Faculty need to be equal participants in decision-making in the college so that Humber can continue to deliver quality education. That is what everyone wants and, what our students deserve. 🇺🇸

Chief Steward's report

Robert Mills, Chief Steward, OPSEU Local 562



Grievances

We have had two new grievances since the last report.

One person grieved improper salary step calculation. Again, this was because a two-year Master's Degree was not credited for a full two years but as only one year. The second was because of a sentence in the acceptance letter for my professional development leave stating that the college was claiming rights on my work done during that leave.

I grieved violation of article 13 (Copyright) of the collective agreement and Humber's own Intellectual Property Policy of 2013. Before going to the grievance hearing and after several meetings, I settled with wording put into the letter stating that I and the college would abide by article 13 and the

policy. There is no problem with that because I was already abiding with both of those; however, it does put constraints on what the college can claim on any work produced during the sabbatical leave.

We encourage anyone who has wording in the letter of acceptance giving Humber a claim on your work during professional development leave to come forward. It also seems the wording applies only in some departments. That kind of application is arbitrary and constitutes differential treatment of those making applications.

To top off the academic year, we have, in table format, shown the schools which have kept us the busiest. Without them, we wouldn't get the practice we do with the collective agreement.

School or Department	Grievances*	Human Rights Complaints*	Accommodation Issues
Applied Technology	1	0	1
Business	0	0	0
Creative and Performing Arts	0	0	0
Health Sciences	0	0	0
Hospitality Recreation and Tourism	1	0	0
Liberal Arts & Sciences	1	0	0
Media	0	0	0
Social and Community Services	1	0	1
Student Success and Engagement	3	3	4

*These are filed by faculty against the school or department

Note: In addition to the individual grievances listed above, we also filed union grievances on inaccurate staffing lists, inappropriate classification of counselling work, and went to arbitration on 11 union grievances. It has been a very busy year! 🙏

Why faculty needs organized labour

Janet Porter, Guelph-Humber steward

According to our most recent data, at least 65 per cent of teachers at Humber are contract faculty. Well over half of the teaching contact hours are taught by contract faculty. This does not include on-line courses, or credit courses taught after 6 p.m. This leaves the bulk of curriculum work to the full-time faculty or to contract faculty who are paid piecemeal. In addition, more administrators have been hired to manage the recruiting and hiring of a huge number of contract faculty each semester. Workload for the associate deans has also very inappropriately been pushed to program coordinators.

Contrary to the very clear grid in the collective agreement, administration continues to downgrade the value of educational requirements, i.e. the two-year Masters Degree and quite possibly the five-year Journeypersons' trade certificate. For one full-time position, a loss of one step, over 15 years of service, has a net present value of more than \$37,000 plus the loss of pension contributions. This down-grading happens every semester to all new hires. (And by the way, adding a discretionary step is nice, but who knows, maybe you should have gotten it anyways.)

On a separate note, we have settled a slew of grievances that alleged excessive hiring of contract faculty. This affects all members of our bargaining unit. We reject the statement that most partial-loads would like to stay partial-

load as myth. There may be a small demographic of older partial-load faculty who are financially secure, but this does not represent the majority. There are many people who would appreciate full-time faculty positions. Surely the college can afford to have more than just 35 per cent of its faculty in full-time positions, and not just in positions of program coordinators.

These are just a few examples of the attack on academic workers by Ontario college employers, as well as many other academic institutions throughout North America. The austerity agenda and its rhetoric are used to camouflage the undermining of union protection and job security. If austerity is so important, why do we not hear about administration salary claw-backs, reduction of supplementary pension arrangements for administrators, or reduction in costly anti-union legal challenges?

Faculty benefit from organized labour. Every time we insist on our rights being upheld in the workplace, we help shift how the college views us, our labour, and our contribution to the success of Humber College in serving its students. Say nothing, and the colleges will continue to run post-secondary education as a Walmart-style business - hiring the majority of faculty as temps and overloading the full-time faculty to make the college system appear to outsiders that it works. 🙏

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**ORGANIZED LABOUR
OPPOSES
THE CASUALIZATION OF
COLLEGE FACULTY**

Chief Steward's corner

Robert Mills, Chief Steward, OPSEU Local 562

Q. What happens to my vacation if I don't take all of it during the current year?

A. You are entitled to take your vacation period as a block (usually July-August). If your supervisor wants to split your vacation period into two or more periods, or move it to another time, he or she must discuss it with you to get your agreement to do so. In that case, you are entitled to 43 days excluding public holidays. However, in special situations that are beyond the college's control, vacation periods may be rescheduled by the college. Even then, the vacation assignments are to be done on a seniority basis.

Q. Why do I have to do all this work that's not on my SWF?

A. You don't. The SWF is your record of work. All work that you do for the college should be recorded on it either as teaching work (first page) or as complementary work (second page). Arbitration decisions have established that if work is not on the SWF, faculty are not required to do it. So, if the faculty do extra work such as open house or student placement work that is not on the SWF, it is considered voluntary and does not need to be recorded or compensated.

One-to-one conversations with a supervisor do not count as assignment and are absolutely no guarantee that the work will be recognized.

There seem to be two types of extra work that faculty are sometimes asked to do without recognition or compensation.

1. Emergency replacement because of faculty illness must be paid for at overtime rates. This is the result of a settlement at arbitration. Time-in-lieu is not acceptable and is contrary

to the collective agreement. The college is required to inform the union of this extra work and receive agreement from the union to do the reassignment.

2. Ongoing tasks such as taking on some coordinator duties, doing curriculum development, attending regularly scheduled meetings, assigned research projects and so on are not emergency in nature. Those duties must put that work on your SWF on an hour-for-hour basis. You must be paid for any overtime that results from the extra work. If the work is not on your SWF, you are not required to do it.

Many people complain that the more work they do for the college outside the SWF, the more they are expected to do. It's cheaper for the college, and it reduces the need for new hires. You can refuse the work. However, if you are ordered to do the work, do it; but come to the union and get advice.

Q. I am a probationary employee. Can I do overtime?

A. No. Probationary employees cannot be assigned overtime work.

11.01 J 4 *Probationary teachers shall not be assigned teaching contact hours or total workload hours in excess of the maxima under any circumstances.*

This means that probationary employees cannot be assigned overtime even in emergency situations.

Any questions about contract issues or workload may be sent to the Faculty Union Office at info@humberfacultyunion or be passed on by telephone to ext 4007. 📞

Digital divides

John Steckley, Professor, School of Liberal Arts & Sciences

The term digital divide refers to the separation of people reflecting their access to and natural ability to use digital devices. The term can be applied to education. This is not just a North/South, Developed/Undeveloped divide, although that profoundly exists. It always surprises my students when I tell them that millions of people have never used a computer, or own a phone. Digital divide also is applicable to education in Canada. Aboriginal peoples in schools on reserves are often under-provided with digital resources, as with all other educational resources, except for the strong motivation and talents of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal teachers to give their students an educational chance.

In our cities and towns it involves divisions at different stages of education. At primary and secondary schools it is reflected in the more pervasive divide of rich and poor. The homes of the rich provide personal (rather than family) computers, scanners, printers and other expensive up-to-date resources that give them a distinct advantage in doing homework assignments. Younger children competing with older siblings for scarce family digital resources suffer.

Due to huge inequities in fund raising, schools in rich areas have far superior technology in their libraries, science labs and to those in poorer areas. There are schools in the GTA that regularly raise over \$280,000 dollars yearly. It could be argued that they have better access to more and better digital equipment than our students and staff do at Humber.

You see the digital divide among the students at Humber as well, if you know how and where to look. The computer room in the North Campus is regularly over-crowded (some students seem to live there), and the line-up for the

printers during the last few weeks of semester, is like the line-up for Tim Horton's on campus on a Saturday. They should show movies while people wait. A study done on personal possession of and access to computers across our student population would be revealing, but to my knowledge has never been done. I suspect that fewer students have ready access to their own up-to-date equipment than is normally assumed.

And then there are different learning abilities and comfort levels. It is one of the great myths of our time that every one of the current generation is a computer whiz. I am certainly not an expert with those infernal machines (I am a card-carrying Luddite), but I have had to instruct students in what I would call computer basics. We talk so much about adapting our classes to different learning abilities and strategies of our students, but we don't seem to say anything about how comfortable or uncomfortable, naturally skilled or unskilled students are with the confounding complexities of Banner and Blackboard (the killer Bees of contemporary Humber). Many are not. Has this ever been asked of our students in any survey? I think not. I am a sympathetic ear to this kind of student complaint, and I have listened to a lot of complaining in this area.

A digital divide of access and ability/comfort explains something I have noticed with my student take-home assignments. I allow them to hand-write their page long assignments, and I find that from one-quarter to one-third of my students take me up on the hand-writing option. Why do they do that? I think that the digital divide is the most significant reason. The moral to this part of the story is that we have to consider lack of digital access and ability/comfort with the digital world as dividing our students in their capacity to have a rich learning experience at Humber. 🙏

Professional development leave

Robert Mills, Chief Steward, OPSEU Local 562

The expiry date for professional development leave (sabbatical) applications was January 19. All the successful applicants have received their approval letters. But again, in its wisdom, the college is messing people about. On some of the approvals, there is a statement along these lines, *The college will have a vested interest in any material of commercial value that is produced during...* The college is saying that anything that someone on sabbatical does that ends up having any kind of commercial value, can be claimed by the college. On the other hand, other letters have no mention of the college having copyright over material.

We believe this is wrong. First, article 13 of the collective agreement states that

Except as may be otherwise mutually agreed between the employee and the College, a work commissioned by the College, or produced pursuant to the employee's normal administrative or professional duties with the College, shall be and remain the property of the College. Other works produced by an employee shall be

and remain the property of the employee. (my emphasis)

This means that unless the college assigned that work to you on a SWF, or you agreed to sign over the copyright, what you produce is yours.

Secondly, Humber's Intellectual Property Policy of 2013 is even clearer on how narrowly-defined college claims are on something you produce outside of normal work.

So, if you have concerns about applying next year, consider that, except in very specific circumstances, anything you produce on professional development leave is your copyright.

For those going on professional development leave in September, if you have any line in your letter of approval that indicates the college is claiming copyright on what you do during your leave, please contact the union office at 4007 to discuss it. 🗑️



A majority oppose Hydro privatization

Pam Johnson, Professor, School of Creative & Performing Arts

Kathleen Wynne's Liberal government is proposing the sale of sixty percent of Hydro One to a private owner. The rationale is that the province needs a large amount of fast cash for transit infrastructure. While there is no doubt that transit infrastructure development and improvement is an urgent need, many are questioning that the sale of Hydro One is the answer.


A recent poll by Stratcom Communications found that 63 per cent of Ontarians oppose the privatization of Hydro One. This is up six points from February. The poll found that the expectation is that rates will go up and that the service will be poorer.

In the digital age, electricity is more and more a critical essential service. A sell-off would mean that Hydro One would no longer be under the same level of government oversight.

According to Ontario NDP leader Andrea Horvath, "It is a one-time hit of cash for the current government that Ontarians will be paying for generations". Hydro One is a consistent revenue generator for the province. Ontarians have been investing in a electricity system for a century through taxation.

This asset will be lost as a fully public entity. We will be subject to the same 'market forces' that caused electricity rates to fluctuate and ultimately rise when the Mike Harris government deregulated electricity distribution in 1999.

Another twist is that this is likely not even legal. When commissioned for a legal opinion by the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), law firm Sacks, Goldblatt, Mitchell said in its report, 'the government has no lawful authority to use the proceeds from such a sale to fund transit infrastructure'.

CUPE has started a campaign called 'Keep Hydro Public', you can participate here: keephydropublic.ca 




PRESIDENT from page 3

Non-teaching periods are "used for activities initiated by the teacher and by the college ... by mutual consent." (from article 11.08 in the collective agreement) Please let the union know if there is an attempt to assign work to you during these time periods.

• **Your Faculty Union General Membership Meeting is on May 27**

Join your colleagues for a great lunch, a little union business, and some door prizes

I hope to see you there! 

Up at the Board

Franca Giacomelli, Board of Governors Faculty Representative



This article is a summary of the March 24 meeting. The meeting started out with one of my favourite presentations—the Humber Varsity Year End Update. Jen McMillen, Dean of Students and Ray Chateau, Athletics Director introduced students Jesse Assing, Men’s Soccer and Badminton; Jose Caro, Men’s Soccer; Thalia Hanniman, Women’s Volleyball; Matthew Isaacs, Men’s Volleyball and Tracy Wong, Badminton. Once again, this year’s Varsity teams have made Humber very proud. The common themes among the students were the value of the Varsity experience to their lives and the appreciation that they have for the support from their teachers and from the Athletics Centre. For full results, visit <http://athletics.humber.ca/varsity>.

New Program Approvals:

1. Journalism Graduate Certificate

This three semester program will include an extensive internship component and will focus on training graduates for the field of journalism with an emphasis on digital journalism. Graduates of this program will be able to fully function in a digital/online environment, including social media and data-based journalism, and will have the skills and knowledge to work as media entrepreneurs/freelancers.

2. Multi-Platform Storytelling for Creative Producers and Screenwriters Graduate Certificate

This two-semester fully-online program prepares students for emerging media landscape with a combined skillset including screenwriting for an array of media platforms, creative producing and entrepreneurial skills.

3. Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioner Diploma

The focus of this three-year program is to produce graduates who have the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to launch a career in this

newly regulated and growing health profession as a TCM Practitioner. Students have opportunities to learn, apply and evaluate their efficacy in TCM professional practice, including skills in research, program management, and ethical decision making. The program is competency based, and is fully articulated with the entry-to-practice competencies that have been ratified by the provincial regulators of TCM Practitioners – the College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of Ontario (CTCMPAO).

University of Guelph-Humber Proposed Budget (2015-2016)

The proposed budget projects Total Revenue of \$58.4 million, Total Expenses of \$41.9 million, and Net Annual Revenue of \$16.3 million. This is based on a target enrolment of 4,100 FTE’s with a 3 per cent tuition increase and continuation of current government funding model.

2015-2016 Humber Business Plan and Financial Budget

The Business Plan projects 4.4 per cent overall enrolment growth in 2015-2016 with one new degree, one new diploma, four new certificates and three new graduate certificates. Humber presented a surplus budget with a Total Excess of Revenue over Expenses of \$13.6 million year-end forecast for 2014-2015 and \$13.4 million in the 2015-2016 budget. These funds will be transferred to Net Assets for Strategic Initiatives which will provide capital for infrastructure projects.

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

(See humber.ca/content/publications for

Employee engagement survey & partial-load faculty

Julian Humphreys, Professor, School of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Over half of Humber's faculty are now on contract with partial-load receiving, on average, a little over half the pay of full-time faculty for the same amount of work.

It would not be surprising, then, if partial-load faculty were the least engaged employees at the college, and consequently an important voice to be heard in discussions of how to act on the results of the Employee Engagement Survey.

The School of Liberal Arts and Sciences is using a fundamentally flawed process for sharing and acting on the results of the Employee Engagement Survey.

The Dean of the School of Liberal Arts and Sciences announced on February 26, 2015 that the forums to "share the results of the Employee Engagement Survey with you" and "involve you in helping to develop 'action plans' for the School" were scheduled for immediately after the end of the winter semester, when almost all contract faculty are no longer employees of the college.

Think about that for a moment. It's a bit like inviting all Canadians to a discussion on how to build a better Canada - to be held only in Toronto.

A forum with an explicit "focus on developing realistic, meaningful and actionable goals that will help us all to feel connected and valued" does not exclude the very group that likely feels least connected and valued. Unless it is genuinely not interested in hearing from them. In which case don't invite them at all.

More recently, I learned that an action committee will be put together to act on the results of the forums, again with an explicit call for representation from contract faculty. Yet the group will be meeting "every other Wednesday at 1:30 pm beginning on May 20, 2015 and ending on June 17, 2015," the exact (and only) period of time in the college calendar when there are almost no contract faculty on campus.

Imagine this alternative scenario for a moment: scheduling the forums and action committee meetings beginning June 18, 2015, when all full-time faculty begin their summer vacations. Imagine the outrage! Yet statistically this would make more sense.

There are, after all, more contract faculty than full-time faculty teaching at the college. How many full-time faculty would offer their time free of charge to help the college improve employee engagement? Very few, I suspect. And full-time faculty, presumably, have more at stake in the future of the college than contract faculty.

Any reasonable person can only conclude one of two things from all this: 1) The Dean of the School of Liberal Arts and Sciences is unfamiliar with basic principles of statistical representation; or 2) She doesn't care to hear what contract faculty have to say about Employee Engagement. Either way, the process is fundamentally flawed and an insult to intelligent people everywhere.

* All quotes are from public communications sent by the Dean of the School of Liberal Arts and Sciences to full-time and contract faculty in the school. 📧