

Newsbreak

Volume 26, Issue 4

April 2016

Hey Humber: read the Charter!

Janet Porter, Professor, The Business School

According to Fredy Meija, Chief Steward Humber College support staff union representative, two organizers for the unionization of part-time support staff campaign www.collegeworkers.org were recently detained and questioned for more than an hour by security at the Lakeshore campus. They were eventually escorted off the premises and told not to return. In addition, at the outset of the campaign, the support staff union executive was expressly told by Human Resources that no Humber resources were to be used for organizing purposes.

In response, Smokey Thomas, head of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU), visited Humber on March 24, 2016. He alleged that, by interfering with the campaign, Humber is violating the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms of part-time support staff. Check out the video (<https://t.co/pM6yqwY7Yk>).

In Canada, freedom of association is enshrined

in the Charter. Freedom of association guaranteed by the Charter includes a procedural right to collective bargaining. Interference in the process of organizing, such as with a campaign to organize, is infringement of the right. The Supreme Court recently upheld the right of the RCMP to organize. One has to wonder what The Humber Centre for Human Rights has to say about the right to freedom of association, not only for part-time staff to organize

but also for the respect of collective bargaining agreements of the faculty and support staff.

Call to action

Many faculty have supplementary support staff contracts as **field liaisons, student advisors, clinical supervisors, invigilators, proctors,**

lab technologists/technicians. If you recently had support staff contracts, you are eligible to sign a part-time support staff union card, available on-line at www.collegeworkers.org. Cards can be signed until April 15, 2016. 🗳️



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Called as a respondent or witness in a Human Rights complaint?

More and more frequently, faculty are contacted by Humber's Centre for Human Rights to attend an interview in regard to a complaint. This can be a significant stressor for the faculty involved.

You have the right to support from a faculty

union representative to help you prepare for the meeting and to attend the meeting with you.

Please call the Faculty Union Office at ext. 4007 and ask for a representative - before setting up an appointment with the Human Rights office. 🏠

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 - Room K-216, North Campus, ext. 4007.

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2nd Vice-President - Janet Porter
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OPSEU Website: www.opseu.org

President's notes

Audrey Taves, President, OPSEU Local 562



Renewal

Spring is here – a time for renewal and fresh starts.

Renewal: Professional Development

Why?

We all need time for professional renewal – time to update or deepen our knowledge base in our discipline and/or to update our skills in teaching (new methods/technologies).

How?

There are as many strategies to achieve these goals as there are faculty members in the college. Attending workshops, courses, webinars, reading recent journal articles, spending time out in your field outside of the college, all can be effective strategies depending on your own personal learning style.

When?

Years ago, the faculty union and the management of the colleges agreed on the importance of professional development and enshrined the right of all faculty (teachers, counsellors, and librarians) to a minimum of 10 working days of professional development per academic year (with one period of at least 5 consecutive days) within our collective agreement.

So... have you taken or booked your 10 Pro-Dev days for the 2015-16 academic year yet?

Renewal: new faculty

As a result of settlements in a number of staffing grievances filed by your faculty union, we will be seeing many new faculty positions posted soon. New faculty bring with them new ideas and infectious enthusiasm as they come into an established faculty group.

What can current faculty do?

Full-time faculty:

1. can offer to sit on the hiring committee for new faculty in their area – and thus help to ensure that internal applicants are considered for full-time postings prior to consideration of external applicants; and
2. encourage contract faculty in their area to apply for the new positions.

Partial-load and part-time faculty:

1. speak with established faculty and managers about the new postings;
2. recognize they have priority for consideration as internal hires;
3. monitor the Humber website for full-time postings: www.humber.ca/careers; and
4. monitor the faculty union bulletin board (outside K216, North Campus) for new full-time faculty postings.

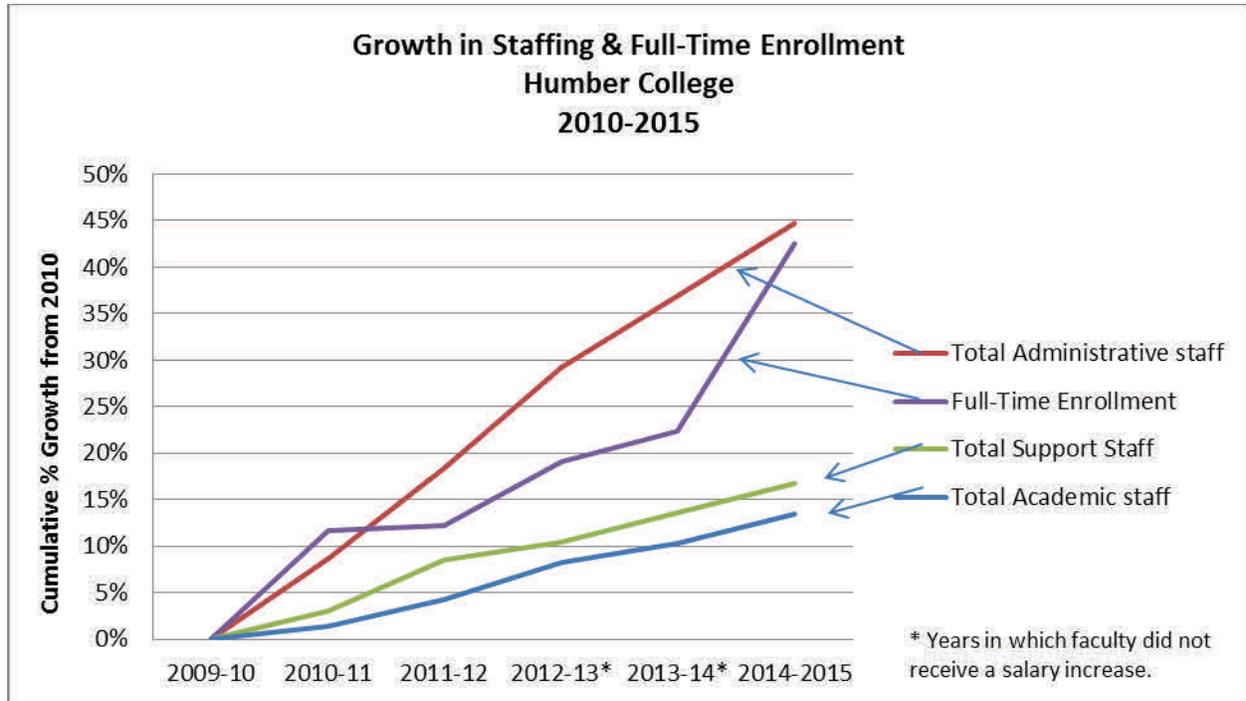
Renewal: Deeper engagement with your faculty union

Is your faculty union a valuable resource? How does the union impact your worklife? Your work environment? Is the faculty union simply a service to be utilized when needed? **OR** a force that requires your participation to be most effective?

Your Local Executive Council, that is, the current officers and stewards of the local, are committed to renewal and increased engagement with you, the faculty. We are seeking more stewards, developing opportunities for deeper involvement in the steward role, seeking faculty participation on new internal union committees, developing more educational opportunities, more small group union meetings, and more. 🇳🇪

My, how we've grown

Bob Bolf, Acting Chief Steward, OPSEU Local 562



Source: Humber Staff Growth: <http://thecouncil.on.ca/articles/129>

Humber Full-time Student Enrolment: 2009-2010 Humber Annual Report Addendum, 2009-2010 MYAA Report Back, page 3
 2010-2014 Humber College, "AR Annual Report Appendices" (2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015)
 2014-2015 Humber Board of Governor's Meeting, Sept. 22, 2015, page 1.

Over the last several years, I noticed what I thought to be a large increase in the number of job postings for administrative positions in the college. Being a proponent of “WTF?”, or “What are The Facts?”, I did some probing and discovered that indeed, the growth of administrative staff at Humber has exceeded the growth in student enrollment since 2010.

Since 2010 Humber has experienced phenomenal growth in full-time student enrollment and administration jobs. Support staff and faculty growth have in no way kept up with the growth in enrollment and administrative jobs.

I would like to get your comments on the increase in administrative staff at the college. Send your comments to me at; bob.bolf@humberfacultyunion.org 📧

Chief Steward's report

Bob Bolf, Acting Chief Steward, OPSEU Local 562



Academic integrity

Starting salary calculation

If you're new to this situation, the college has been giving one year's worth of educational credits to new faculty who have a two-year Master's degree. The collective agreement clearly states that faculty with a two-year Master's degree must be awarded two credits towards their starting salary calculation. The college has insisted that its own interpretation of this clear language is the correct one. We have had to take this to arbitration. The arbitration panel has found that the college has been in violation of the collective agreement.

We are now working with the college to make the necessary adjustments for current faculty who have been short-changed and for future hires.

Bridging of benefits for partial-load faculty

If you are partial-load faculty, you should be aware that the college is changing its practice of providing benefit coverage during inter-session periods. Starting next year, partial-load faculty will only be able to bridge their benefits if they have a signed partial-load contract for the next term. The college is playing games with us by insisting that partial-load faculty will have to pay for benefit coverage during the first month of teaching as well. This is in violation of the collective agreement and we are talking to the college to get it to correct this.

Denial of health claims

("Go see the union")

We recently heard from a full-time faculty whose health claim was denied by the college's insurer. When the faculty member approached their Human Resources representative for help in this matter, they were told to "go see the union". We have been working with the faculty member and the college to get the health claim accepted.

What struck me about this is that this is not what I would have expected from one of the "top ten employers in GTA". I'm probably a bit old-fashioned about this, but I believe that HR is here to serve and help employees, not just communicate the benefit plan. Instead, HR (this part of it, at least) is here to police the organization, not help employees.

Random thoughts

You have probably heard faculty members or administrators talk about "what's best for the student". I recently took part in a discussion where an administrator made a powerful distinction in what this means. There is one interpretation that means "keep the student happy", the other is "need to maintain academic integrity". Clearly, academic integrity is what's best for the student. Whether its their future job, or further education, our students have to be able to function at an acceptable level, at a minimum. Keeping students "happy" may not be in their best career and life interest. Have you seen college policies that seem to be aimed at keeping students "happy"? 🇺🇸

Successful arbitration: salary calculation

Janet Porter, 2nd Vice-President, OPSEU Local 562

For many years, the college had de-valued a two year Master's degree when calculating placement on the salary grid. As a result of a successful arbitration, the college must now give two years of education credit for the two-year Master's educational qualification. Faculty should ensure this interpretation is being followed prior to signing offers or contracts.

The Academic Union-College Committee (UCC) is reviewing the two-year Master's step calculation. The committee corresponded with all full-time and current partial-load faculty regarding this issue on March 24, 2016 by email. Affected faculty should be responding to the email or getting in touch with the union office if you haven't received it.

Humber policy continues to systematically undervalue other educational qualifications. This includes, but is not limited to:

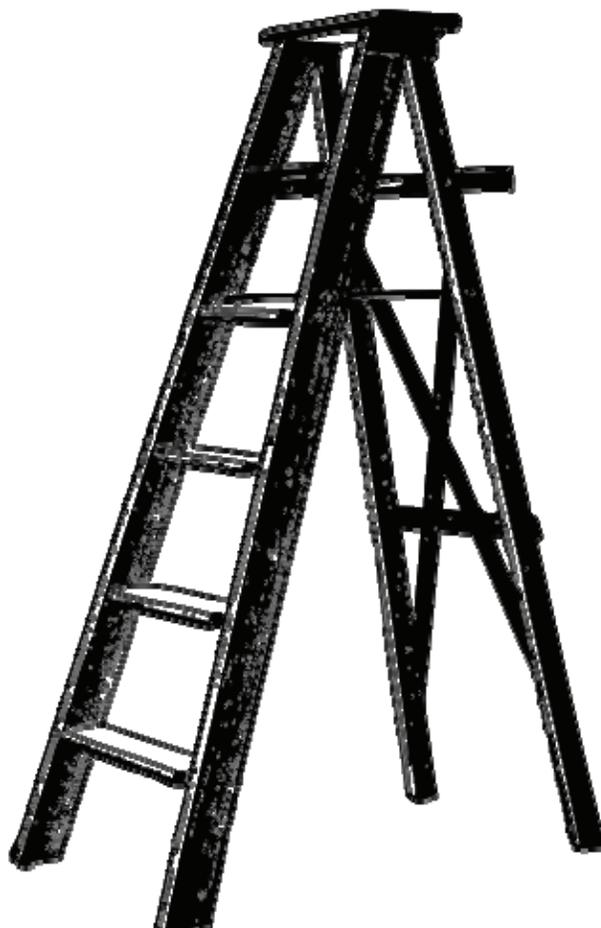
- 3-level Certified Journeyman (for trades)
- Undergraduate education required to become a lawyer
- Formal work/study programs such as P.Eng, CPA, Red Seal
- Multiple relevant categories of education
- Co-operative work-education
- Concurrent work/study accomplishments.

These salary calculation practices affect placement on the salary grid, future earnings, and pension contributions for affected faculty.

These practices have affected the salary placements of at least 500 full-time faculty. Over an average of 15 years of service, Humber College has saved **\$11.8 million** in wages and **\$1.63 million** in pension contributions. Since 2005, Humber College has saved **\$6.56**

million in partial-load faculty wages, along with over **\$730,000** in pension contributions.

Faculty have been battling this systematic under-valuing of faculty credentials since 2012. Faculty grievances on similar salary calculation issues at other colleges have a firm history of being upheld in arbitration. Humber College fought hard in arbitration to maintain its one-year Master's degree interpretation. We are hoping for more reasonable responses on the outstanding salary interpretation issues in future meetings with Humber College. 🏠



Contract faculty day of action



The **February 11, 2016 Contract Faculty Day of Action** was a success! Students, full-time and contract faculty across the province posted and tweeted photos and messages of support for fair working conditions for contract faculty. This day was also a historic first: a joint activity between Ontario's university and college sectors.



More photos: www.contractfacultyforward.ca/feb_11

My experience as an “expert witness”

John Steckley, Professor (retired), School of Liberal Arts & Sciences

You may have seen in Newsbreak or heard somewhere in the halls that a job was being offered to someone in your or another school because of a successful union grievance. While I can't even pretend to know what the entire process is like, other than to know that it is lengthy and complicated, I can tell you a little bit about what it is like being an expert witness for the union in such a procedure.

First, you go to where the arbitration is being held. I liked it better than I thought I would as they had really good coffee there (once I learned how to operate the machine), plus muffins on a table, and lunch in another room, all free. I sat down in a very comfy chair with muffins and a cup of coffee in front of me for one day and one morning. I jokingly referred to that location as ‘my office’. I could have spent a week there writing (my favourite retirement activity).

The formal part of being an expert witness is this. There are the union people on one side of the room, led by our lawyer. There are the administration people on the other side, led by theirs. And then there are the people who are running the meeting and, I guess, making the ultimate decision of what will happen. I sat in the middle. I was sworn in (not at, my usual) to tell the truth, and while we were in session I could not speak with anyone on either side (I had to be reminded twice). During the short breaks, I was not permitted to talk to anyone involved, but I could sit with the coffee and muffins in my office and write.

First, the union made its case for there being

a full-time academic job when the work had been handled by part-timers and other contract staff. I was provided with information about the work in question, and was asked questions concerning my knowledge of the courses taught. The time flew by and I was very comfortable doing this.

As the grievance that I was involved with had started late in the morning, the administration side asked for another day to cross-examine me. I was fine with that as I had established my office in the room with the coffee and muffins. I wrote a short story that morning.

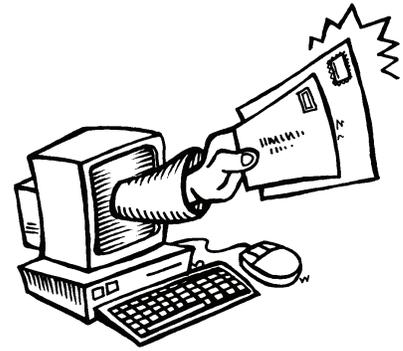
The next day was harder. The questions were such that they would lead to not having another hiring. Sometimes I felt that I was being led somewhere I didn't want to go. I disagreed with a couple of the points their lawyer was trying to make. Fortunately,

knowing about how fast my temper can be, in my left pocket I had a piece of amber that I would hold onto when I felt my emotions rising. It worked. And I felt that I had accomplished something.

In sum, I would say that I would do it again, and would encourage my former colleagues to do the same if they can. I was hired in 1986 because of a successful strike in 1985, so I was well aware that I had my job because of the union. You, yourself, may well have your job because of the process I have just described. I hope that you would say ‘yes’ if you are ever asked to be an expert witness in such a procedure. It is for a great cause. 🙏



Letters to the Editor



Re: Business as usual?

When the colleges were first established in the 1960s, they were proposed as places where many members of society who previously never had an opportunity for post-secondary education, could get that chance. Colleges were touted as places of second chances, especially for people who were working class or who previously had been excluded. Thousands of Ontarians have had the benefit of receiving a college education that includes training and so-called soft skills, such as the social sciences, English and other languages. I believe the colleges can do more.

There is a glaring weakness which we need to see and correct. The vast majority of programs, courses and activities serve the needs of employers, corporate interests and the status quo of a capitalistic economic and political system. The college system socializes us to the status quo. This is evident by simply examining the current material promoting Humber's programs at the post-secondary level, as well as the promotional material on continuous learning activities. Where are the courses and activities related to worker occupational health and safety, labour history, collective bargaining, human rights, technological change, workplace stress, labour economics and related subjects? When we examine the pro-business culture that we work in, many of us assume that this is a natural order of things but in reality, this is far from the truth. The absence of such courses and activities is a political choice/priority at the highest levels of education and politics in this province. We require courses, such as the ones suggested, which are designed to create political consciousness and effective citizenship to enable needed social

change. Such educational activities would make our democracy stronger.

Through the educational activities suggested here, we could then more responsibly deal with the serious economic and social problems we face today. What kind of problems? Deregulation, cutbacks, contracting out, precarious employment, systemic racism and sexism, de-skilling of jobs, irrational trade deals, underfunded health care which now seems to emphasize profit and not public health care, the Americanization of public education here in Canada, the application of business priorities and values to the public sector where public services increasingly now reflect the culture and ethics/profit orientation of business, unpaid internships which are the "new normal" of exploitation especially for aspiring college graduates, and other related issues.

It is my view as a retired faculty member who has worked at Humber College for 34 years, that business as usual in the college system means less job satisfaction for many college employees. Also, the growing use of on-line courses threatens job security, produces a decline in the quality of education that learners receive, and results in a less-prepared student body today and in the future. As our students try to make their way in the world, let us organize curricula that give them the training they require but also the skills, attitude and knowledge to build their communities. These were my priorities when at Humber and they remain so today. Business as usual only works for some.

Joe Grogan

Professor (retired), The Business School

Notice of Elections

We need STEWARDS, OFFICERS, and TRUSTEES
for OPSEU Local 562 - your faculty union
Term of office: June 1, 2016 to May 31, 2018

Rules for steward elections:

1. The term of office for all stewards and officers of the faculty union expires May 31, 2016.
2. **Deadline for steward nominations: Wednesday, April 27, 2016.**
3. Stewards are nominated and elected by the members of their own school, division, campus location or occupational classification. Elected stewards form the Local Executive Committee of the faculty union.
4. Any member, including partial-load faculty, is eligible to stand.
5. Nominations for steward shall be submitted in writing to: Chief Returning Officer
Faculty Union Office (K216, North Campus).
6. Nominees must signify in writing to the Returning Officer that they accept the nomination.
7. Steward elections shall be conducted no later than Wednesday, May 4, 2016.
8. All members in each school, location, etc. are eligible to vote. A majority of 50 per cent + 1 of valid ballots cast is required to be elected. Run-off ballots, if necessary, will be conducted no later than Wednesday, May 11, 2016.

Rules for officer elections:

1. Officers will be elected at the General Membership Meeting on Wednesday, May 25, 2016. Details TBA.
2. Only duly-elected stewards are eligible to stand for the offices of President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, Chief Steward, Secretary, and Treasurer.
3. To be elected, a candidate must obtain a majority, which is 50 per cent + 1 of the valid ballots cast.
4. Nominations for officer shall be submitted in writing to: Chief Returning Officer
Faculty Union Office (K216, North Campus).
5. **Deadline for written nominations: prior to the May 25 General Membership Meeting.**
6. Nominations may also be made orally at the meeting itself. If the nomination is in writing, the nominee must signify acceptance in writing. If the nomination is made orally at the meeting, the nominee may accept in writing or orally at the meeting.

Rules for trustee elections:

1. Two local trustees shall be elected at the **May 25 General Membership Meeting**. They serve as the faculty union's audit committee.
2. Elected from among the membership-at-large, and may not hold any other local union office (such as steward) during their two-year term. Nominations as per officer elections.

In order to enhance inclusive participation in local union activities, OPSEU 562 has a Family and Attendant Care Policy. The policy provides reimbursement to cover additional costs resulting from attendance at a union function. Copies of the Family and Attendant Care Policy can be obtained from the union office (room K-216, ext. 4007).

The faculty union's democratic governing system, including election procedures, is governed by Article 28, "By-Laws for Local Unions" of OPSEU's Constitution and Local 562 By-Laws.

The steward nomination form is on the back page.

Up at the Board

Franca Giacomelli, Board of Governors Faculty Representative

I have enjoyed my six years on the board immensely, but in June my term ends. This creates the opportunity for someone new to step up. The faculty representative position is a three-year volunteer position, renewable once. The board is currently comprised of ten external and four internal elected members (faculty, administration, support staff, and student representatives). I feel that my position has given me the opportunity to get involved in some very important decisions and to have some influence on Humber's future. It has given me a deeper understanding of how the college works, how decisions are made, and who makes up the Humber team. It is also no secret that we are treated to some very delectable dinners! The election details will be available in the Communiqué in early May. I encourage faculty to consider running for the position.

The following are the highlights of the March 22, 2016 meeting:

Integrated Risk Management (IRM) Annual Report

In 2014, the college started developing its IRM Framework. Since then a list of 35 risks have been identified, scored and assigned to an owner. Action plans have been developed for extreme and high risks. IRM has been aligned with the business and budget planning cycle, and the framework will be continuously improved to increase the maturity level of the IRM program.

University of Guelph-Humber Proposed Budget (2016-2017)

2015-2016 has been a very good year for Guelph-Humber. Enrolment is currently estimated to be approximately 400 over the

projected 4,100. The result is revenue over expenses \$5.3 million more than budgeted. The proposed budget for 2016-2017 projects total revenue of \$66.4 million, total expenses of \$47.3 million, and net annual revenue of \$19.1 million. This is based on a target enrolment of 4,600 FTE's with a 3 per cent tuition increase and continuation of current government funding model. Guelph-Humber does not have its own human resources and purchasing departments, registration office, etc., thus making it a very cost-effective joint venture between the two institutions and all surplus goes to strategic initiatives.

2016-2017 Humber Business Plan and Financial Budget

The business plan projects 1.9 per cent overall enrolment growth in 2016-2017 with 2 new degrees and 3 new post-graduate certificates. The budget includes an addition of 35 complements to full-time staffing (15 faculty, 13 support staff, and 7 administrative positions). These numbers are proportionate to the current staffing and many of these positions are currently filled with contract staff. Humber presented a surplus budget with a total excess of revenue over expenses of \$13.4 million year-end forecast for 2015-2016 and \$18.4 million in the 2016-2017 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 for financial statements.) 



Join the Local Executive Committee!

Would you like to work with a great team of faculty?

Want to support your colleagues and be someone they can turn to?

Come join our union's Local Executive Committee as a steward

- You can help ensure that the needs and concerns of faculty in your program area are represented to your local union executive and on to Humber management.
- You can help to improve working conditions in your school.
- You can support and represent your colleagues in workplace issues.
- You can help strengthen our union – together we are stronger.
- You can become a catalyst for change in our workplace.

How do you become a steward?

- If you have questions about the role, contact one of our current stewards or officers

to have a chat about the benefits and rewards of being a steward.

- Let your colleagues know that you are interested in becoming a steward.
- Ask one of them to nominate you as a steward for the upcoming steward elections.

Come out to one of our monthly meetings to see how we work together. Call ext. 4007.

Other ways to get involved in your faculty union

- Become a trustee (audit the books).
- Join the following committees :
 - √ Contract Faculty Forward
 - √ Health and Safety
 - √ Diversity and Equity
 - √ Human Rights
 - √ Return to Work and Accommodation
 - √ Social/Recreation
 - √ Workload, and more....

Steward nomination form

I, _____, nominate _____

to serve as steward in _____ (school/area) ,
for the term of June 1, 2016 to May 31, 2018

Signature of Nominator: _____

I, _____, accept the nomination.

Signature of Nominee: _____