

Dear SFUFA Members:

The following bulletin contains information on:

- pension transition
- collective bargaining
- Re-organization of Human Rights Office and GP 47 revisions
- Fall General Meeting
- member networks and contact info

Pension Transition:

The window for purchasing past service in the BCCPP is approaching its close, as the vast majority of members were provided deadlines of mid-October for the first round of purchase. For members who chose not to purchase past service or did not use all the funds in their Sun Life Academic Pension account, please read carefully.

Second Window for BCCPP Service Purchase:

If you did not purchase service this year, or chose to purchase only some of your eligible time, you are likely able to participate in the second and final opportunity in 2023*. To do so, however you MUST get a new calculation of cost, as costs change annually based on age and salary. And to have a new statement of cost generated, you MUST write to pensions@sfu.ca to request a new calculation of cost for past service. Please note: statements are not free – while the full cost of actuarial calculations was covered in 2022, members will need to pay a portion of the cost in this next round. Members will be required to contribute \$500, and SFU will want to see specific acknowledgement of this in your request. If you want a new statement of cost generated to have the option of participating in the 2023 buy-back, you should include in your email the following statement:

“I agree to pay a fee toward the administration and actuarial costs for preparing a personalized Statement of Cost and authorize SFU to deduct a \$500 fee from my pay.”

We anticipate that SFU will send out its own announcement of this process in the coming days or weeks; please do keep an eye for that announcement, as it may contain further details.

Please note: purchase of past service in the BCCPP is NOT required; those who continue to prefer to keep their SunLife pension funds with SunLife may do so and need not take any action.

In any pension decision-making, it is strongly recommended that you speak to a financial advisor before making a decision as to how to proceed.

**The BCCPP has indicated that there are two scenarios that might limit one’s ability to participate in the second round:*

- 1) The member reached age 71 in 2022, or

2) The member ends their employment with SFU and does not submit an application to SFU within 30 days of their termination date

Residual Balance in Academic Pension Plan/ SunLife Pension Account:

This section DOES NOT apply to members who elected not to purchase any past service with the BCCPP. It ONLY APPLIES to those who did purchase past service, but did not use ALL their SunLife/APP funds and continue to have a residual balance in the SunLife pension account.

Canadian law (The Income Tax Act) does not allow one to hold more than one pension for the same work over the same period of time. As a result, if you use any SunLife pension funds to purchase past service in the BCCPP, you are required to close your SunLife pension account. You do NOT need to transfer remaining funds to the BCCPP, but you DO need to transfer them to another retirement vehicle. SunLife has told us that the deadline for members who have a partial balance remaining to transfer the residual and close the SunLife pension account is to be set by SFU – the University, however, has not yet responded to a request for this date.

Again, this does NOT apply to those who chose not to purchase past service, and it does NOT apply to those who used all of their SunLife pension funds to purchase service. It applies only to those members who used a PORTION of their SunLife pensions to buy BCCPP years of service and still have a residual balance in the SunLife pension account.

Bargaining Update:

SFUFA and SFU have now set dates to commence collective bargaining. Our teams will meet in late November for 2 days, and are currently working to set additional days in December.

As reported in our previous bulletin, we have identified the following priorities based on the survey and member consultation sessions:

1. Salary and inflation
2. Workload
3. Benefits, and mental health benefits in particular
4. Teaching Faculty
5. Governance and Transparency

It is not clear whether SFU has received a specific mandate from the Province to guide its bargaining; we are, however, following closely developments in the public sector more broadly to help us understand what the provincial government appears to be prioritizing and where other organizations are finding productive spaces for negotiation.

Human Rights Re-Organization and GP 47 (Bullying and Harassment) Revisions:

The University is currently in the process of updating its policies and procedures related to Bullying and Harassment, and is restructuring these together with the Human Rights Office, bringing them under the umbrella of the Vice President, People, Equity, Inclusion.

SFUFA has been working closely with other campus employee organizations to bring forward our concerns with the Bullying and Harassment process, which in our view fails to provide protection for complainants, due process for respondents, and transparency for all involved. The process is, in our view, broken, and all too often makes matters worse rather than better.

Perhaps even more concerning, however, is the administrative move of the Human Rights Office. This office has till now been arms-length from the administration of the University; its staff did not answer to the day to day administration of the University, allowing the Human Rights Officer the freedom to investigate complaints and reach decisions independent of institutional leaders. To remove this independence and make the Human Rights Office part and parcel of the University's Human Resources stream is deeply troubling and raises serious questions about SFU's commitment to, and ability to provide, meaningful protection of fundamental human rights.

General Meeting:

The Association's Fall General Meeting will be held on zoom on **Thursday, November 17, at 2:30 pm**. As well as general Association business, we will hear from Alison Hearn, Chair of the Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee of the CAUT, about the current state of academic freedom at Canadian universities. Further details will be provided in the coming weeks, but for now please do diarize the GM.

Departmental Contacts and Chairs and Directors Network:

As we begin a new academic year, a reminder that SFUFA maintains a list of members who volunteer to meet periodically to share information from their Departments and to discuss issues of broader interest with colleagues across the University. The group is open to all, and interested members are encouraged to contact Dan Laitsch at dlaitsch@sfu.ca

A separate network for Chairs and Directors is maintained by SFUFA President Kumari Beck, and provides an opportunity not only for Chairs to hear directly about major issues on the SFUFA radar, but also to bring forward their own concerns as academic administrators and to share these with others who play a similar role. Chairs who are interested in participating should contact Kumari at kumari_beck@sfu.ca

Alternate Contact Info:

Finally, a reminder that SFUFA is collecting alternate contact info – email or phone numbers – for members. Given some of the issues we have faced with periodic unstable University communications, we are hoping to maintain alternate ways of reaching you in the event that SFU’s systems are not available and we need to communicate with members. Emails and/ or phone numbers provided will not be used for regular business, but would only be relied upon in the event that SFU’s systems are not functioning securely. To provide us with an alternate means of reaching you, please contact Executive Director Brian Green at bsgreen@sfu.ca