

Dear SFUFA Members:

The following bulletin contains information on:

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### **Fall General Meeting and Social**

The Association's Fall General Meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 5<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 pm on zoom. A member social will follow. Details of both will be sent in the coming days, please do mark the date on your calendars.

### **Faculty Hiring Freeze Over**

While no official announcement has been made, SFU's Administration has confirmed to the Association that the faculty hiring freeze has been lifted. While they continue to speak of ongoing budgetary challenges, the University has been clear that there is no longer a freeze on faculty hiring, and units may proceed with proposals for faculty renewal as normal.

### **Faculty Experience Survey**

SFUFA is launching a short survey to gauge member experience with various offices of the University, and with SFUFA. The survey will come to members on October 27 and we would encourage you to take a moment to share your thoughts. Results will help us to identify which areas need to be prioritized for attention so as to build greater support for members across the system.

### **Court Ruling re: Member Motions**

Members may recall that in (month year) several SFUFA members brought a lawsuit against the Association, arguing that 2 motions proposed by other members at the AGM and passed by

electronic ballot were improper and should not be allowed to stand. On August 29<sup>th</sup> the BC Supreme Court dismissed the case, finding in favour of the Association.

While the content of the member motions - related to Israel/ Palestine - was a significant factor in the complaint, the Court's ruling is significant for the Association and its members as it reinforces a number of general principles that guide our work and the democratic/ collegial decision-making on which associations like SFUFA are based:

- 1) broad interpretation of the Association's mandate and the right of members collectively to determine that mandate
- 2) a reiteration that academic freedom is not a restrictive, constrained principle, but one that is expansive and international in scope; she found similarly that the concepts “integrity of the academic profession” and “fostering high standards of excellence” – both of which appear in our Constitution- are similarly broad
- 3) confirmation that defense of academic freedom is no way incompatible with the right of Association members to bring political motions to the Association's meetings and that the Association has, throughout its history, accepted political motions at General Meetings

The petitioners have lodged an appeal of the decision, and so we will be going back to court to defend the ruling.

The complete text of the ruling is available on the SFUFA website at: <https://www.sfufa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/BC-supreme-court-2025.pdf>

### **Equity Cmte Workload Survey**

In Fall 2024, the [SFUFA Equity Committee](#) administered the SFU Faculty Workload and Equity Survey with the aim of understanding faculty perceptions of workload during and after changes to university operations brought on by Covid-19. Over 500 of SFUFA's approximately 1200 members completed the survey. This represents a response rate of 41% overall, and those responses break down by Faculty as follows: the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (29%), Faculty of Science (20%), Faculty of Applied Science (9%), Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (8%), Library (8%), Beedie School of Business (7%), Faculty of Education (7%), Faculty of Environment (5%), and Faculty of Health Sciences (4%). Thank you to those who completed the survey.

As the Equity Committee prepares a full report for circulation to SFUFA members, we share some key findings emerging from the data:

- Members report a dramatic increase in workload over the past five years, now reporting working well over 50 hours per week, with women reporting the most substantial increases in workload.
- Factors increasing **service** work include more administrative demands for faculty and departmental assessment, increased committee work with fewer faculty members to divide the work, and attacks on EDI and decolonization increasing reported workload for Indigenous members in particular.
- Factors increasing **teaching** workload include the rise in requests for student accommodations and cases of academic dishonesty related to AI use, and increasing class sizes, particularly for teaching faculty.
- Factors increasing **research** workload include reduced departmental staff supporting research processes, increasing training needs of graduate students, and required adjustments to multiple new systems to manage research projects.

Stay tuned for further insights on workload inequities at SFU as reported by SFUFA members.

### **Medical School Update**

On October 14<sup>th</sup>, SFU announced the opening of applications for its first batch of students in the new School of Medicine. The status of those instructing the students, and the issues with programming and curriculum that have been raised by faculty senators remain outstanding. The Association is pursuing the question of medical school faculty through the legal means available to us, but timing of when our case might be heard is unclear. Issues for both SFUFA and issues of concern for Senators are outlined in a stand-alone bulletin issued recently, which can be found [here](#).

### **Pay Timing – January 2026**

SFU has announced that they will be adjusting the timing of member pay in order to align all SFU employees on the same schedule. Currently faculty are paid on the last day of a given pay period, and the new system will see members paid a week following the period worked. This amounts to a one week delay in pay, which we expect will begin in January 2026. Information on the change can be found [here](#).

SFU is legally allowed to make this change, and other universities have done the same in recent years. We do not, then, have grounds to challenge the shift, but we do think it important that members understand the impact so as not to find themselves unable to pay critical bills in January.

The impact of SFU's move is that one week of pay will be delayed - members will see a real loss

of a week's pay, and that loss will be made up only at the time of resignation or retirement, when the "catch up" happens under this new system. While other places, such as Trent and UPEI offered interest free loans to assist employees with the transition, we are not aware of any such plan at SFU. As it stands, in fact, members will be providing SFU with an interest-free loan. That is, members will see a delay of 1 week's salary as we move into the new year, with that deferred salary only being paid at the end of one's employment. Specifically, rather than being paid the normal bi-weekly salary on January 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, members will be paid for one week on January 9<sup>th</sup>, one week on January 16<sup>th</sup>, and the normal 2 weeks on January 30<sup>th</sup> and bi-weekly thereafter.

We are concerned that SFU's communications on this have been insufficient and not at all transparent about the real impact on member income during the transition. We encourage all faculty members to prepare for a real drop in pay in January while SFU moves to defer one week's salary earnings.

#### **Reminder – Alternate Contacts**

Given periodic disruption of SFU's internet and email systems, the Association is collecting alternate contacts (email or phone) for members, to be used only in the event that we need to reach you during a time that the University's communications systems are not functioning. Members can send alternate email addresses and/ or phone numbers to SFUFA Executive Director, Brian Green, at <mailto:bsgreen@sfu.ca>