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THE 2008/2009 EXECUTIVE

Frank Cosco
PRESIDENT (08)

Brenda Appleton
VICE-PRESIDENT (08)

George Rudolph
TREASURER (09)

Dianna Morgan
SECRETARY (08)

Ingrid Kolsteren
CHIEF STEWARD (08)

Linda Duarte (08)

Brock Elliott (08)

Wayne Avery (09)

Maggi Trebble (09)

Settimio Sicoli (09)

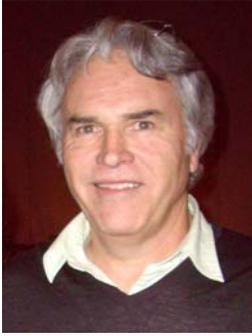
Vacancy (09)

Lizz Lindsay
PAST PRESIDENT

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VCCFA GENERAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2008
2:30 PM
ROOM 210
DOWNTOWN CAMPUS

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



FRANK COSCO
VCCFA PRESIDENT

President's comments

From the 400 and 500 block West Pen-der.... Our union office is in a lively, edgy neighbourhood with lots of street activity (the open drug dealing at least has moved somewhere). There are good restaurants and coffee shops, good sushi holes-in-the-wall, the literal hole-in-the-wall Gorilla Food vegan place, cheap pizza, many international students, and very good book-stores. This morning, as happens frequently, the strong deep tones of an aria was bouncing off the sunlit buildings. His voice rising above the traffic, the singer--a big man with a straw hat--was letting loose from his wheelchair, his artificial legs also shining in the sun as he always seems to wear shorts.

Executive meetings

The exec has met three times this month (we have a vacancy, let us know if you're interested in running). Most issues are commented on in this edition. Some ongoing items include:
~working on a labour curriculum project
~ getting input into the strategic plan process
~ how the Centre for Instructional Development should be staffed and function
~ what happens to medical/dental and other benefits for post 65 faculty
~ a survey of department heads and coordinators

AGM and Holiday Social

Thanks to the 100+ members who attended, our staff rep Weldon Cowan and provincial Secretary-Treasurer Dileep Athaide, and especially to Audrey Vickaryous, Lizz Lindsay, George Rudolph and Settimio Sicoli who did the organizing and most of the serving. We got our annual business and elections done and had a good time partying. A warm thanks to **Cheryl Deyalsingh** who completed her term

on the Executive and decided not to run again. Her wit and incisiveness will be missed at our executive meetings. Incumbents George Rudolph, Wayne Avery, Maggi Trebble and Settimio Sicoli were acclaimed for a two-year term running till the AGM in 2009.

The Mat Leave for Terms Arbitration

It was really great being at this arbitration especially with babies Hunter (1½) and Sarah (3 months), not to mention their mothers and other mothers who testified to the discrimination they were dealt as others passed them in seniority and regularization while they had and brought up their babies. The settlement (see page 7) was a fair one. Congratulations to all.

College Board

The Board has not met publicly since October. The next meeting is on January 31st. Members of our executive will be meeting with the Chair, Mark Stock and the College President prior to the board meeting. We plan to discuss the budgeting and funding issues as well as possible system changes the government may be planning.

Conferences

In addition to participating in two April conferences in New York on equity for post-secondary faculty, I have been invited to be part of a workshop at BC TEAL on unionization and professional standards.

Time goes by

It's amazing how you just get used to a new month and then it's already the 22nd.

~Frank

FINANCIAL CONCERNS FOR 2007/08 and BUDGET CONCERNS FOR 2008/09

This issue has come more and more to the fore as the Education Plan proposal for 08/09 is being prepared. With varying levels of consultation most department heads have been either asked by Deans to help cut their 08/09 training plans or told by Deans what those cuts will be. The VCCFA Executive has been involved in a few meetings with VPs Legg, Davis, Henderson and the President. We have criticized the tone of the December memo that went out to department heads which attempted to rein in spending for the rest of this fiscal. Many department heads read it as an implication that their spending was out of control which certainly was not the case. We have also criticized what is too often a lack of consultation by the Deans. Consultation is defined in Article 3.11 as the "serious exchange of information and ideas before action is taken." We've asserted that the Deans have to be held to that standard.

As noted on page 5 there are serious VCC problems affecting the financial situation.

We have outlined what we have learned in a January 21st memo to Department Heads. We advise department heads who have concerns regarding process to register them in letters to the VP Education and the appropriate Dean (please copy the union on them). The Education Plan will be going to Education Council in March and we understand EdCo plans a special meeting to deal with the plan where there will be an opportunity for affected departments to present their views to council.

Please contact your EdCo faculty rep or the chair Karen Shortt (8525).

*B. Appleton
T. Barber
L. Downie
L. Friesen
S. Gibson*

*D. Hunter
B. Nobel
H. Pearson
M. Vanderwal*

~fc

Be in the know!

Join the VCCFA Executive!

There is currently a vacancy.

The Executive meets late afternoons
on most Mondays.

If you are interesting in running for
the position, please contact Audrey at
604-688-6210 or info@vccfa.ca for a
nomination form.



COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Dennison speaking at Vancouver Public Library, February 11, 2008

The VCCFA is sponsoring a free lecture by Dr. John Dennison, Professor Emeritus, UBC, at the Alice MacKay Room, VPL Central Library at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, February 11, 2008. Dr. Dennison's talk, "A Social and Educational Phenomenon: The Community College in BC" will outline the history of British Columbia's community college system. The impact of community colleges on the social and educational fabric of B.C. is generally not well recognized.

This story deserves to be told, especially in light of recommendations in the recent Campus 2020 report written by Geoff Plant, which threaten the future and status of community colleges in B.C.

Dr. Dennison is Professor Emeritus of Higher Education at the University of British Columbia, where he taught for 35 years.



He has written four books and published over a hundred articles on various aspects of post-secondary education in Canada. Among his best known works are:

*Canada's Community Colleges:
a Critical Analysis*
and
*Challenges and Opportunities:
Canada's Community Colleges at
the Crossroads*

Both books are available at the VCC Library.

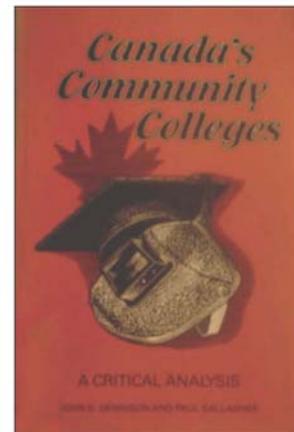
Vancouver Public Library presents

John Dennison

Community Colleges in British Columbia

monday
february 11

7:30 p.m.
Alice MacKay Room,
Lower Level
Central Library
350 West Georgia Street
Admission is Free
Seating is Limited



BC's first community colleges were established in the 1980s, when access to post-secondary education was restricted by age, socio-economic status, educational record, and geographic location. Today, low tuition fees, small classes, open access and high teaching standards provide unprecedented opportunities for students seeking professional qualifications and financial security.

John Dennison has had a distinguished career as a Professor of Higher Education at UBC. He has written four books and published many articles on the topic of post-secondary education.



Vancouver Public Library
www.vpl.ca

Co-sponsored by the
Vancouver Community College Faculty Association

IS VCC FACING A BUDGET SHORTFALL FOR 2008/09?

At the January meeting of Education Council, Alan Davis, VP Education provided information about the proposed Training Plan and ultimately the Education Plan for 2008/2009.

The Training Plan

The College is planning a status quo training plan, although Davis indicated that there may be some slight shifts in FTEs. Some courses/programs may have fewer streams, while others may be looking at increases.

In some cases, the shifts would be more extreme, as the VP Education has recommended the elimination of our Electronics Department. The Electronics faculty members have counter proposed elimination of their Common Core, while retaining (and perhaps expanding) the offerings in their Telecommunication Program. The Vice President's office is currently reviewing this option, and will bring forward a recommendation for the consideration of Education Council at February's meeting.

Our Vice President reviewed the context in which the training plan is developed noting

- ◆ Performance in relation to our planned targets projecting about a target of 86% enrolment of our training plan and 87% of the AVED/ITA target.
- ◆ Demographics: the gap between enrollment and 100% of our training plan results from the declining numbers of 18—24 year olds.
- ◆ The economy: low unemployment rates in BC traditionally translate in a decline in attendance at institutions of higher education.
- ◆ Competition: VCC is surrounded by other public and private colleges. In addition school districts are becoming more aggressive in offering developmental and career programming.

He also provided information about a recent agreement signed by the College (and other public post secondary institutions) with the Industry Training Authority (ITA). For the first time, there will be financial penalties for institutions not meeting utilization goals and targets, with 70% of the seat value to be returned to ITA in the following fiscal year for unmet capacity. Financial incentives for exceeding capacity are yet to be determined.

The Education Plan

While the Training Plan is projected to be status quo, departments are being asked to provide scenarios to their deans outlining how to cut 5 – 10 % of their budgets. The College could be looking at a deficit of several million dollars, and left without resources to fund any new initiatives.

Davis outlined that the College expects to be in a deficit position because of substantial cost overruns due to:

- ◆ Increases in the cost of fringe benefits
- ◆ Increases in facilities operating costs (i.e. cleaning, security, etc.)
- ◆ Costs associated with operating the new building (to date, we have not received any Notification that our provincial grant will increase to cover this)
- ◆ Costs associated with the stabilization and upgrading of our computer network and computing.

There was no mention of the additional \$ 2million a year associated with significantly increasing our compliment of administrators over the past few years.

The College is, therefore, looking at adjustments to our schedules and training plan to

- reflect student demand in all our offerings,
- balance the need to maintain capacity with the need to be responsive to the limited demand at this time,
- ◆ Strategically adjust capacities to minimize risks with respect to ITA.

The VCCFA has met with administration to discuss this situation, see article on page 3.

~ba

Meetings

Members of the executive meet regularly with department heads and coordinators from each of the college's schools. Our latest have been in ESL and with the Arts and Sciences group. It's a good opportunity to share concerns and to raise points which we can then pursue with the college. Examples have included space allocation, heating, and student recruitment. Department Head workload is a constant concern as is lack of clarity with too many administrative procedures. We will be contacting other groups of IRAs over the next few months.

Union Survey

As an outcome to the last round of bargaining we do have a joint union/management committee set up to discuss IRA workload and related issues. Our reps are Karen Shortt and Maggi Trebble. To support their work, we are planning a short survey designed to gather input. Watch for it.

On its January agenda, it is expected that the Board will have a motion to raise tuition across the board in the 08/09 academic year (from August 2008). The union executive has written all board members asking that they set this motion aside and instead do a comprehensive review of tuition and other fees before considering any increases. There do not seem to be the criteria for placing certain programs into one classification as opposed to another, nor for moving from one category to another. There are actually seven categories of fees at VCC: free, reduced standard, standard, partial cost recovery, cost recovery, continuing studies, and international. We asked if departments who were arbitrarily deemed "cost-recovery" in 2002 are doomed to stay in that category indefinitely. We also said that unnecessary assessment and application fees are counterproductive and should be either reduced drastically or removed.

NEW NON REGULAR COMMITTEE

The VCCFA has started a new committee to look at the working conditions, needs, and rights of non-regular instructors. The purpose of the committee is to provide information, and to discuss and advocate for the rights of non regular instructors.

Following up on our successful (un)wine and cheese events from last October, we held our first meeting Jan 15 at the Broadway union office.

Next meeting will be Tuesday, February 26 ~ 3:30 to 5 at the downtown union office.

The committee is open to all FA members, but we do want to particularly encourage term and auxiliary instructors to join us. If you would like more information or have questions, call the union office.

VICE PRESIDENT EDUCATION FORUMS

VP Davis held another couple of forums in December where he reflected publicly on a number of current College issues. While the content may not always be the most engaging, it is refreshing to have an administrator speak frankly and openly on topics and to welcome some real discussion and debate on them.

Maternity Rights for Term Instructors!!

Here are the main points of the agreement we reached with the College.

- * it applies to term instructors who have held 6 cumulative months of term work. Remember, this work can be at any time status and does not need to be consecutive.
- * it applies to part time regulars for possible top up appointment
- * it applies to those who are about to have a baby, adoptive mothers, and those who have given birth.

Here are the rights achieved in the settlement:

- ◆ maternity leave for up to 52 weeks for work they would have had.
- ◆ accrual for seniority and regularization while on maternity leave
- ◆ MSP coverage for up to 52 weeks
- ◆ Extended Health Benefits for up to 6 months
- ◆ Ability to buy back pension. College will pay their share for up to 6 months.

The settlement is retroactive for the 9 individual instructors named. As a result of the settlement, one instructor has been regularized, one is in process. All are receiving retroactive seniority and regularization accrual adjustments. Currently, we have two term instructors on maternity leave.

Rights of term instructors and human rights are important to our union. These are important issues and we are pleased that we were able to come up with an agreement with the college that works well for our members.

How will this work? or What does one need to know if one is a term instructor and pregnant or have recently given birth or adopted a baby?

- ◆ You will be offered available term work normally in seniority order as per article 4.8.
- ◆ When offered the work, do NOT decline it because you want to be home with your baby. Accept the work you are entitled to and then tell the College representative that you will be going on maternity leave. You will need to supply documentation as per Article 8.

For more information call the union office.

Remember what to say if you are a term, are offered work, and want mat leave:

"Yes, I will accept that work and I want to go on maternity leave."

If you would like more information, call a steward or the union office.

ingrid

The Washington Post runs two contests each year. In one, readers are asked to supply alternate meanings for common words. In the second, readers take any word from the dictionary, alter it by adding, subtracting, or changing one letter, and supply a new definition. Here are some of the winners:

pokemon, n. a Rastafarian proctologist

testicle, n. a humorous question on an exam.

flabbergasted, adj. appalled by discovering how much weight one has gained.

coffee, n. the person upon whom one coughs.

Dopeler effect: The tendency of stupid ideas to seem smarter when they come at you rapidly.

Hipatitis: Terminal coolness.

Osteoporosis: A degenerate disease.

Intoxication: Euphoria at getting a tax refund, which lasts until you realize it was your money to start with.

BARGAINING 1998—2001

This series is to provide background and context for decisions that we will have to make as the next round in 2010 gets closer. This third installment reviews the crucial 1998-2001 round, which has set the tone for the three rounds which have followed it. Previous articles:

#1 *What was wrong with the 2007 bonus [Sep/Oct 07]*

#2 *VCCFA (VIA) bargaining up to 95-98 [Nov/Dec 07]*

1998-2001

Starting United and Ending Locally

Looking back on the success of coordinated job action in 1996 and the new *Framework Agreement of 1995-98*, faculty union reps wanted to build upon the significant achievement of a first-ever common scale and their new shared agreement.

A system wide process started in October 1997 where CIEA, now FPSE, hosted all faculty unions to discuss how to engage our employers in 1998.

It was decided to create a provincial Bargaining Council made up of two reps from each local and through it a provincial Negotiating Committee with one rep from each local. The individual locals who chose to join would commit to an *Agreement of Association*.

A list of issues to be tabled commonly was hammered out. All other issues were to remain under the jurisdiction of the locals. It was also agreed that strategy would be to find a way to start things off at the provincial level.

Key features of the *Agreement of Association* included: co-chairing by the BC GEU and FPSE; the common ownership of all issues referred to the Council; a designated staff person from both the GEU and FPSE acting as co-spokespeople; and a commitment from each local who joined not to leave the process to make a deal until the common process was concluded.

Prior to the commencement of talks with PSEA's management representatives the unions came up with a list of issues they would pursue. That did not mean that those issues would then automatically be on the bargaining table. Because this delegation of bargaining issues was voluntary from both sides; both sides had to agree on the list of issues to be bargained. PSEA resisted our list but in April '98 after about two months worth of talks they accepted for the most part the topics we had ratified.

Bargaining went slowly with a long summer break, recommencing in the fall of '98. It was a complicated agenda but progress was made towards what would become the first *Common Agreement*. It tried to improve features of the *Framework*. New and improved items included :

- ◆ Common Harassment Procedures with prompt outside investigation
- ◆ Leave for Union Business
- ◆ Strengthening the Contract Training and Marketing Society
- ◆ Prior Learning Assessment procedures
- ◆ Copyright protection
- ◆ Leave without Pay up to 24 months / Additional Parental Leave
- ◆ Improved Benefits: 95% EHB with unlimited lifetime amounts

NDP government wage controls in effect at the time meant that salaries only went up 2.1% in the third of three years with no increases at all in year one and two. However, as a side commitment, the government promised to move our pension plan to joint trusteeship, a very significant advance. They fulfilled that promise in 2001.

One of the most contentious issues was regularization. It took a united move to strike votes in September and the threat of system wide strikes in October, 1998 to get a last-minute deal that included not automatic regularization as the VCCFA already had but a mediated/arbitrated process that would allow for regularization where there was an expectation of ongoing work. While the special mediation was very significant for many locals who had had no regularization at all, we did not take part because our pre-existing language was (and is) superior.

Local Table without money but with a strike vote

The conclusion of the provincial deal in October did not mean that bargaining was finished. Our local committee, chaired by Lorna Downie, had to try to bring in a deal after the provincial issues had been settled but without an allocation of monies to the local table. Our major local issue was release time for department heads and coordinators. Management stalled. We still had a valid strike vote and notice had been given. To keep it alive, we had to use it. On the evening of November 23rd, we pulled teachers out of KEC from 6:30 to 8 pm, our ninety minute strike. This certainly got the attention of management and they actually proposed a firm and increased amount of release for all IRAs. We agreed to the amount and a process for its allocation.

Ongoing Problem with Provincial/Local structure

With the significant exception of salary, which was caught by wage controls, the '98 provincial round has to be considered a success, even though for the VCCFA the regularization issue as pursued provincially was not key because of our superior provision. We supported our sister locals for whom it was very important and right till the end were hopeful of getting some monies to use locally.

The key strategic difference between the '95 round and the '98 round was starting locally and finishing provincially in '95, and starting provincially and finishing locally in 1998.

What's remained from this round is the problem of how to resource local bargaining around important issues that haven't reached the provincial table.

As will be seen in the subsequent three rounds, the problem has been getting worse, not better.

-fc

Presidents had a regular meeting on a Friday and Saturday in mid January.

Possible "university" announcements

There are strong rumours that the government will announce the conversion of at least the three remaining University-Colleges — Malaspina, Kwantlen and Fraser Valley — into "regional universities" as proposed in Geoff Plant's Campus 2020 report. Rumours persist that this may happen as early as the government's throne speech in February. On behalf of the VCCFA I raised concerns that FPSE needed to be ready with a position that despite what the government may do, the key issue is how to fund and resource all the institutions, whatever they are called. There's far too much emphasis on being/becoming Universities rather than being well-functioning post-secondary institutions. If the move to more "universities" does happen the "noise" level will increase and it may become that much harder for the remaining colleges to have their voices heard.

Policy Table kicks off

The first substantive talks between the faculty unions, government and employers will get going soon. The first topic is skills training and the functioning, or lack of functioning, of the Industry Training Authority.

And...

~~Wondering if VCC lost any investments in sub-prime mess as UBC did?

~~Environmentalist Andrew Weaver (part of non-Al Gore half of Nobel Peace Prize) will be our keynote speaker at the AGM in May.

~~Our provincial ad campaign has raised our profile and issues around the province.

~~Canadian Council of Learning has good report on training shortages, go to www.ccl-cca.ca Post Secondary Education in Canada: Strategies for Success

~~The Summer Institute for Union Women will be at the University of Victoria, usually early July.

~~FPSE is planning a survey of administrative places in the BC system...long overdue.

~~Standing Committee members will be meeting jointly at the February 16 conference.

~~I continue to work on a number of PC projects: an update of the policy book, a paper on age neutral pensions, the organizing subcommittee and a reference group on ITA

~ fc

STRATEGIC PLAN

The FA Executive has been impressed with this latest Strategic Plan endeavor under the direction of Associate VP Deanna Rexe. As endorsed at the November General Meeting we have offered input on behalf of the VCCFA and several Executive members will be participating on working tables that have been established. We of course reserve the right to criticize the final result. While this type of planning is important it is unfortunate that it is coinciding with a time of budget concerns and pressure to cut offerings. That kind of pressure does not dispose one kindly to open-ended visioning.

For the record these are the main points we have made so far:

Input to Strategic Planning Project ~ Suggested Priorities

1 Enhanced student and program support

- 1.1 appropriately staffing the library with librarians
- 1.2 appropriately staffing counseling services with counselors
- 1.3 re-instating professional nursing staff
- 1.4 re-instating diagnostic services for learning disabled students

2 Tuition fee reductions within the context of an affordable fee policy that continues to seek the elimination of tuition

3 Prioritizing enhanced facilities, services and conditions of work

- 3.1 a desk for every instructor who wants one
- 3.2 appropriate and effective environmental initiatives
- 3.3 safety at work initiatives
- 3.4 a women's centre at both major campuses
- 3.5 acoustic improvement to classrooms
- 3.6 health inventory of dangerous work environments
- 3.7 constant maintenance/improvement of cleaning

4 Development of a more engaged work environment

If not common break times, then scheduled college days should be more frequent

5 Higher profile for VCC as a citizen/participant in the life of the community

Examples would include street dinners, supplying speakers on relevant societal issues, taking public policy stances on relevant issues.

6 Improved marketing of programs with appropriate involvement of faculty

7 Sustained efforts at getting under-represented groups – faculty and students – into non-traditional areas

8 Succession planning for faculty, including a limited number of ERIs

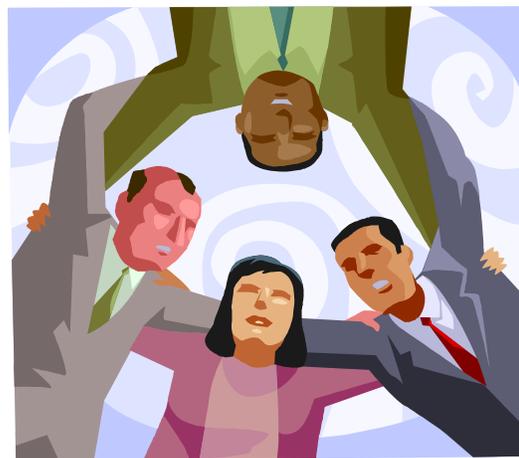
9 Enhanced investment in faculty wherein VCC strives to be at least the third ranked college in

- funding for PD, Curriculum Development, and Education Leave
- the provision of office space and technology/infrastructure support

10 Enhanced investment in faculty wherein VCC shows it values the contribution of IRAs by appropriately increasing their number and/or their release time.

11 Continue to improve and enhance the development of respectful and professional labour/management relations

vccfa ~ 12/07



As we often mention, from time to time the Executive makes representations to EdCo or to EdCo faculty on issues that are before them. Two recent policy proposals are the latest examples.

Program Renewal

This proposal would replace the current program review policy. Much of it is not controversial although there are some troubling decreases in the roles of Instructional Associates and of the Council. What has been removed is a process for dealing with programs that are having some difficulty, a process to review them and make recommendations for potential recovery. With that process gone, the college only has a VP controlled policy called "Criteria for Development or Cancellation of Programs." It lists some criteria the VP-Education has to consider and that's it. There's no process, no engagement. The VP can do what he feels is appropriate. This is what recently happened in Electronics, where with minimum notice and discussion with the department, the VP proposed to EdCo that it be terminated later this year. (That department has since engaged with the VP and EdCo and is in the midst of proposing an alternative.) The union executive has recommended to EdCo faculty that this policy proposal be worked on to improve it.

Affiliation

This is a new policy proposal that would fill a gap since there's no current VCC policy on affiliation with other institutions. The proposal, if passed by EdCo and the Board, would allow the President to execute affiliation deals provided he considers a list of criteria. He would only have to report to EdCo or to the Board for information.

The union executive has recommended to EdCo faculty that this proposal be improved by ensuring an ongoing role for EdCo. That is a role given to it by legislation and especially if an affiliation deal includes the recognition of credit from another institution. It should not be simply a one time sign off.

For more information contact your EdCo faculty rep or the union office.

No doubt the news that mandatory retirement is gone is not news. There is though the issue of what benefits anyone over 65 will be entitled to. There is no current VCCFA member in that group as far as we know. The Act that changed the law to eliminate age discrimination for retirement also permitted age discrimination to continue in the case of pension plans. No one will be allowed to contribute past age 69. It also allows discrimination in the case of benefits. Here things are not as black and white as they are with pensions. It says employers will have some discretion and that they will be permitted to continue "age-based distinctions under bona fide group or employee plans."

Associate VP Rob Henderson released a notice at year-end outlining what VCC will do for benefits. VCC will continue sick leave accrual and usage, basic medical, extended health, and dental coverage with no change. It will end both STD and LTD. Voluntary Life coverage for those that pay into it will end at 66. Group life, which maxes out at almost \$250,000 will be reduced to \$10,000 at age 66 and can continue till five years past retirement at that level. Accidental Death and Dismemberment will end at age 65.

The VCCFA was not part of any agreement on this topic. We have indicated that we consider the subject open and wish to have further discussions on it. We are surveying other colleges to see how they have responded and have already noticed some differences. We have suggested a full benefit committee meeting and will continue to engage with the College on the issue.



EMPLOYEE FAMILY ASSISTANCE PLAN

An employee-wide email from Associate VP Rob Henderson on January 22nd announced that the College is commencing employees' access to this professional support service starting February 1st.

This item has been on our bargaining agenda more than once but has fallen off in the push/pull of bargaining. A major point of concern in the past for the VCCFA was the mandatory nature of the proposal. Previous formulations would have meant only the counselors from the particular company the College engaged would have been covered. If a member wanted to go to someone else they would have had to pay their own way.

What the College is initiating with the firm Shepell-fgi is comprehensive, confidential, one-stop access to a number of skilled counselors at no cost and *at the members' discretion*. If a member (or family member) wants to go to someone else for a counseling service that is caught by our Extended Health provisions that is fine too.

The range of counseling services under this EFAP is wide, from family issues and substance abuse to financial and legal worries. We do not know much about the company involved but trust that the College has investigated them and we are hopeful that this will become a valuable service to those that need it. We commend the College's initiative under VP Henderson for bringing it about.

The email from VP Henderson contains more information and a pamphlet will be distributed widely.

IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO ALL EMPLOYEES ON BENEFITS

Pacific Blue Cross has advised that the Medi-Assist telephone numbers for members travelling outside of North America have change.

Pacific Blue Cross provides assistance to members and their dependents who experience medical emergencies while travelling outside the province. Brochures are available in Human Resources which contain the new telephone numbers for accessing Medi-Assist while travelling. Please call anyone in HR at the Broadway Campus or drop by to pick up a brochure. At the Downtown campus, please call or see Ngee-Moi in HR in the Administration area.

COLLEGE PENSION PLAN SEMINAR—MARCH 5, 2008

Please note that the correct date for the upcoming College Pension Plan Seminar is:

**Wednesday, March 5, 2008
1:00—3:30 pm
Room 5025, Broadway Campus**

**To register, please email
hrregistration@vcc.ca**



Kristin Kassel (Helland)



On December 24, 2007 Kris lost her courageous battle with cancer.

Kris joined the College as a Hair Design instructor in 1993. She loved teaching and this was reflected in her students' enthusiasm and her colleagues respect. In her 15 year career she was a positive force in our department with a never ending smile and a love of life. She had numerous admirers within our clientele who will also miss her dearly. Her colleagues will miss her contagious laughter and her endless support. She will always be in our hearts and we know that she will be laughing at us from heaven.

~ Hair Design Faculty

A large octagonal graphic containing a reminder. On the left, there is a pink sticky note pinned with a blue pushpin. The word "Reminder!" is written on the note in a black, cursive font. To the right of the sticky note, the text "PD Funds application deadline is February 29th!" is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

**PD Funds
application
deadline
is February 29th!**

EDUCATION IN THE NEWS

UNIVERSITIES PREPARE TO LOWER STANDARDS

A flurry of articles in December appeared about universities reducing the number of provincial exams that potential students must write to qualify for admission. Both SFU and UVic are lowering their requirements. Both schools face growing competition for students within B.C. In addition, they are losing many potential students to universities in central Canada which do not require provincial exam marks for entrance. UBC, however, has rejected a similar proposal citing possible grade inflation by disreputable private high schools

*UBC Won't Ease Up on Exams,
Vancouver Sun, Dec. 14, 2007*
*Universities Prepare to Lower Standards,
Vancouver Sun, Dec. 11, 2007*
*Fairness Reason for Fewer Exams: UVic,
Vancouver Sun, Dec. 14, 2007*

POST SECONDARY EDUCATION SHOULD BE OUR FIRST PRIORITY

In this article, Gary Mason appeals to Canada's political leaders to heed the recommendations in the Canadian Council of Learning's latest report on post secondary education. This non-partisan education think tank recommends articulating a well defined set of goals and objectives for post secondary education. So far, federal and provincial governments have done nothing to meet these recommendations and have ignored several concerns including the growing labour shortage. In addition, the cost of post secondary education which has risen nearly four times the rate of inflation, keeps potential students away from pursuing an education. Check out the report at www.ccl-cca.ca.

Globe & Mail, Dec. 20, 2007

\$3 MILLION DONATED TO SFU

Milton Wong has donated \$3,000,000 to the SFU School for Contemporary Arts, which will anchor the Woodward's redevelopment project.

Vancouver Sun, Dec. 14, 2007

CIBT EDUCATION GROUP TO BUY SPROTT-SHAW COLLEGE

Sprott-Shaw has been purchased by a company that runs 17 post secondary schools in China for \$12,000.00. The purchase will allow CIBT to export Sprott-Shaw's 140+ vocational programs, as well as directly market Sprott-Shaw's schools across B.C. to Chinese students.

Vancouver Sun, Dec. 18, 2007

IT AIN'T PRETTY

Finland has one natural resource – lumber. Like Canada, they have over harvested their forests. They too, are closing pulp mills, and 1,400 jobs are forecast to be lost. What is different about the situation from similar scenes in B.C. is that everyone who has lost their job enrolled in some kind of education program. Rural Finns are as well-

educated as urban ones because of the long standing policy of free and accessible university. Finns realize that their own lumber resources cannot be harvested as in the past. Unlike Canadian lumber companies, they are investing in new technologies, research and development, and working globally. Finns have been exporting their forestry expertise, investing globally, and modernizing their companies. They believe

in the value of education, and workers are encouraged to return to the free post secondary system for upgrading and new career training.

Report on Business, Dec. 2007

LANGARA COLLEGE OPTS FOR MANDATORY TRANSIT PASS

Langara students voted to pay \$38.00 per month, as part of tuition fees, for a transit pass that would normally cost \$69.00. All students will be issued a mandatory transit pass by the spring of 2008. The same transit pass is mandatory for UBC & SFU students for under \$25.00 each month. Why then, is Translink's proposed rate for VCC students over \$50.00 for this pass?

Vancouver Courier, Nov. 16, 2007



MORE SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS

ADMINISTRATIVE SCALES COMPARED TO FACULTY TOP STEP

Salaries are the top step for each classification; each one has a six step scale. They are from a College document dated January, 2008

Percentage increases are over December 1997 amounts. Only Administrators with salaries comparable to and above top-step faculty are included. The President's salary in the 2008 column is being confirmed

	Dec 97	Apr 00	Apr 01*	Apr 02	Oct 02	Apr 06	Feb 07	Feb 08
Pr	117200	120000	159400	159400	159400 +36%	180000 (est)	195,000 +66.4%	to be checked
V-P	97941	99441	101430	116464	121955	121955	148045 +51.2%	151154
Assoc VP							112651	115017
Deans	87229	88947	82221	99513	104205	104205	106393 +22% +34.6%	108627
Directors	79019	80599	82221	99513	104205			
Dir, Labour								94605
Assoc Dir						76023	77619	79249
Others	60547	61758	62993	69073	72330	72330	73849 +22%	75400
Faculty top step	61900	65200	66504	71000	71000 +14.7%	75674	76480 +23.6%	78729

*In April 01, the administration was restructured. Most of the former Deans became VPs and the VP position moved to a newly-created Pay Grade. A new category was created to include both Directors and newly-appointed Deans.

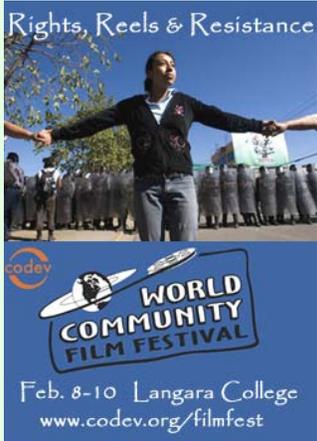
Number of Administrative Positions with salaries comparable to and above the top step of faculty. Number in parentheses refers to their pay grid.

	Dec 97	Apr 00	Apr 01	Apr 02	Apr 03	Apr 04	Apr 06	Feb 07	Feb 08
President	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
VPs (9)	3	2	4	3	4	3	3	3	3
Assoc VP (8)								1	2
Deans (7)	3	3	6	5	5	5	7	7	8
Directors(7)	9	9	10	10	11	11	11	11	12
Director, Labour									1
Assoc Dirs * (6)						1	9	13	12
Others** (5)	7	12	11	10.5	11	10	11	11	10
Total	23	27	32	29.5	32	31	42	47	49

* Pay-Grade 6 includes 7 Associate Directors/Registrars, the Director of Aboriginal Services, 3 Managers and the Senior Program Coordinator in Continuing Studies

* Pay-Grade 5 includes a variety of positions such as 5 Managers, 2 Associate Directors, the Human Rights Coordinator, a Consultant, and a Project Analyst.

WORLD COMMUNITY FILM FESTIVAL — February 8–10



Over 35 films on social justice issues

Rights, Reels and Resistance is the theme of the World Community Film Festival February 8–10 at Langara College.

The seventh annual film festival features documentaries set around the globe about social justice and environmental issues.

This year's theme reflects the urgent need to acknowledge and celebrate resistance and the fight for human rights in communities across the world.

VDLC holds its 15th Annual Robbie Burns Supper



What does Robbie Burns have in common with the kids from Queen Alexandra School?

For 15 years now the Vancouver and District Labour Council has put on a Robbie Burns Supper in support of the Queen Alexandra School's morning programs. Over the years many thousands of dollars have been raised by the Labour Council.



Robbie Burns (1759-1796) is known for his poetry, wit and celebration of life. The annual VDLC dinner celebrates this while raising money for the local school. This year, the VCCFA clan joined along with many unions and community people, all appropriately dressed in kilts and tartans and enjoyed their temporary Scottishness. The annual event is fun, full of all things Scottish. The star of the night of course was the haggis piped in by the pipers band, followed by a theatrical performance to celebrate the haggis, toasts to lassies and lads and Scottish dances. A special highlight was the children from Queen Alexandra School Choir entertaining us with their Scottish songs.

AND A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL ...

VCCFA AGM - November 29, 2007



Dessert anyone?



Lots of food choices ... *is that Dalton and Vinit?*



Settimio and Lizz tending bar



Last table ... last call ...



Tiffany Kalanj of the SUVCC thanks our members for their ongoing support

STEWARD UPDATE

As usual it has been an active time on many fronts for steward work.

Elections

First, congratulations to newly-elected steward, Karen Shortt, and those re-elected: Pauline Barratt, Leona Friesen, Brian Haugen and Maggi Trebble; as well as associate stewards Chantal D'Argence and Rose Marie Watson, a great group of stewards! We had an all day training day in December and an appreciation lunch to thank the stewards for all their work for the members. Here are some brief comments on some of the issues we've been working on.

Maternity Leave Grievance Settled!

Our long fought-for maternity leave for term instructors grievance was resolved at the arbitration table, December 7, 10, and 11. We do mean long; some of the babies are now toddlers, walking and talking. One of the younger ones, three month old Sarah, attended the hearings to watch her mother testify (possibly the youngest ever to attend an arbitration in BC). After five union witnesses had testified and been cross examined, the union and College started discussing possible resolutions.

We are happy to report that by the end of the third day, we came to an agreement on the rights of term instructors who have 6 months of term work to access maternity leave. (See separate article on page 14 for details.) We also came to an agreement for the nine individual instructors named in the grievance who we had identified as being in this situation. This is an important settlement for us as it confirms the rights of term instructors and women. Special thanks to our members: Laura Bowie, Carla Endrizzi, Margaret Fast and Michelle Mihailoff who testified at the arbitration. Thanks to FPSE for their moral and financial support and for the contribution of our staff rep, Weldon Cowan. Very special thanks to our lawyer Caroline Askew who conducted our case so well. We are still working out a detail or two on the final letter of agreement with the College.

Right to Term, not Auxiliary, work Confirmed

Another long time grievance also involving the rights

of non regular instructors has been resolved. The College had been hiring auxiliaries instead of terms in one area. After many discussions with the College, we are happy to report that this has been settled. From now on, the College will offer term appointments instead of having the work done on an auxiliary basis.

VCC Day issue resolved.

This grievance was on an administrative instruction to use of PD time to attend VCC day. The College has agreed that VCC day was not a PD day. We've asked that in the future the nature of such a day be made clear ahead of time.

Length of notice over a holiday period

A grievance concerning the notice time for layoffs is almost resolved.

Layoffs

We work hard to mitigate, avoid, or at least postpone any layoff. We rely on our collective agreement language in Article 6.4.2 in the common agreement. We believe that layoffs should be an absolute last resort and that the College needs to do everything possible to mitigate any potential job loss. Through use of creative scheduling, one current layoff notice has been withdrawn. A potential layoff in another area was avoided by reassigning the work.

Unfortunately, two electronics instructors have been laid off and are on the recall list; two others are on notice.

Interpersonal Issues

We've become aware of a number of interpersonal concerns between members. Issues involving difficulties with communications and interactions between members in the workplace can be very distressing, especially if they continue without being addressed. We need to be able to work together in our work groups.

We are working with a number of members to try and sort out these issues. When there are interpersonal challenges, there are a variety of resources to assist our members: stewards, the Human Rights Coordinator, possible outside mediation, and others. Our best advice if you find yourself in this kind of situation is to not let it linger. Time does not seem to help in these situations. Pick up the phone.

Outstanding Grievances

We have arbitration dates set around a grievance on the status of PD if one needs to take a bereavement leave during a PD period.

We also have a grievance about discipline. We hold that the College's removal of a department head was too harsh a form of discipline. The College has denied the grievance at Stage 2. We have referred it to FPSE for arbitration support.

Working with member and departments

We are working with department heads and departments around a number of issues, including safety, scheduling, interpersonal issues and the running of a positive department. In all these situations, stewards are involved and we make sure all members are represented and that proper process is followed.

Meetings

As always we've been having lot of meetings. We meet with our members, individuals, groups, and departments around collective agreement issues. We represent our members at meetings with the College around probation, accommodations, and departmental issues. Stewards are available to represent you at meetings with the College and we recommend that you take one along.

Selections and Elections of Instructors with Responsibility Allowances

These seem to be ongoing with a number of both acting and ongoing positions posted; stewards continue to be active on selection committees and in chairing election processes.

Ongoing Engagement

We continue to work with the College and our members to resolve issues on an informal basis. Recently, we were able sort out a step placement and a PD entitlement issue. We continue to work with members and the College on accommodations that allow members to come back to work or to continue work. We field lots of calls for information about scheduling, leaves, regularization, hiring criteria, and workload. Give us a call.

~ ingrid, for the stewards

DID YOU KNOW?

Bereavement Leave and Absence for Family Illness

The Collective Agreement stipulates up to 5 days of paid bereavement leave.

Additional leave may be granted by the College. The Agreement mandates up to 5 days absence per year with pay for family illness. Additional leave may be granted by the College.

In either of these situations, let your department head know if you need to use either of these provisions.

Department Head and Coordinator Elections

All regular instructors and all term instructors who hold an appointment during the month of an election meeting can vote. Voting is by secret ballot and elections are conducted by union stewards.

Moved? Moving?



Remember to notify the VCCFA office of your

New address
Telephone number
Email address

Call Audrey at 604-688-6210 or email
info@vccfa.ca

PARTICIPATE

VCCFA welcomes your input.
Send your letter, comments and pictures to the editor.

Email: info@vccfa.ca

Mail: 401-402 West Pender Street
Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1T6

VCCFA STEWARDS

**Ingrid Kolsteren
(Chief Steward)**

(604) 688-6210 ikolsteren@vccfa.ca

Pauline Barratt	Downtown Campus	443.8560
Malcolm Cant	Downtown Campus	443.8438
Leona Friesen	Downtown Campus	443.8715
Brian Haugen	Broadway Campus	871.7393
Wayne McNiven	Downtown Campus	443.8438
Rene Merkel	Broadway Campus	871.7370
Michele Rosko	Downtown Campus	443.8492
George Rudolph	Downtown Campus	443.8360
Karen Shortt	Downtown Campus	443.8525
Janice Sigston	Broadway Campus	709.5640
Karin Steichele	Broadway Campus	871.7206
Maggi Trebble	Broadway Campus	871.7254
Chantal D'Argence	(associate steward)	726.3637
Rose Marie Watson	(associate steward)	443.8495

We're on the
web
www.vccfa.ca

Newsletter Editors:

Brenda Appleton
Frank Cosco
and
Audrey Vickaryous

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**Please print any changes that may apply to you
and forward through intercampus mail to the VCCFA office
Attention: Audrey**

Notice of Address Change

Last Name: _____
First Name: _____
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Postal Code: _____
Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____
Effective Date: _____
Division: _____
Department/Area: _____
Status: _____
Email Address: _____