



VOICES IN THIS ISSUE: May 2022

PRESIDENT'S VOICE: Reflections on the SGM, by Jordan Morelli ... 1-2

BARGAINING ALERT! Bargaining Is Underway, by Leslie Jermyn and Amy Kaufman ... 2-3

FYI: Spring General Meeting Recap, by Leslie Jermyn ... 3-4

FYI: Grievance or Mediation and Arbitration, by Leslie Jermyn ... 4-5

GRIEVANCE CORNER: Working for a Safe and Healthy Workplace, by Peggy Smith ... 5-6

LETTER TO THE EDITOR: QUFA Elections, by Adèle Mercier ... 6-8

PRESIDENT'S VOICE

Reflections on the SGM

QUFA's Spring General Meeting took place on 21 April 2022 via Zoom, and Members debated a number of important issues

**By Jordan Morelli
President, QUFA**

Despite teaching for over twenty years, I am always struck both by how much busier things get in April once classes finally end, and by how quickly the university goes quiet once the grades are finally submitted.

Ordinarily, I am slowed down in my attempts to submit my final grades by having to change my password to access SOLUS. But this year I was foiled completely by the new endpoint authentication system, which prevented all my efforts to access the system. Thankfully, I was able to avail myself of the support of our undergraduate program assistant. I'm pretty sure I wasn't alone in this!

I would like to take a moment and reflect on QUFA's Spring General Meeting, which took place on 21 April 2022. The meeting was well attended, and for the most part it ran smoothly. We managed to get through quite a lot of important business, including having a debate of a number of

SAVE THE DATE

Special General Meeting

QUFA is holding a Special General Meeting to complete unfinished business from the Spring General Meeting:

**Tuesday 31 May 2022, 2.00 p.m. ET
via Zoom**

Please contact Elizabeth Polnicky (ep43@queensu.ca) to RSVP and for Zoom link.

substantive motions. There was one item that we didn't complete, and so we are holding a Special General Meeting on 31 May 2022. I hope you will mark your calendar and attend.

Conducting meetings well is something of an art. We have the benefit of our experience and the rules of procedure to guide us, but allowance must be made to take into account the nature of the meeting. A small meeting where the participants are generally expected to agree on the agenda topics does not need to be conducted as formally as a large meeting with controversial agenda topics. Add Zoom to the mix and it's safe to say that we are still learning. Learning how to deal with and manage the threat of "Zoom-bombings," managing speaker lists, having an open chat feature that's a challenge to monitor, or restricting the chat to the team of people trying to keep the meeting flowing. Then

there are the non-Zoom-related challenges, such as striking the balance between ending the meeting on time and allowing as many people as possible to be heard. Anyone who has been to a large convention knows that it takes a team to run a large in-person meeting effectively. To run even a moderately sized meeting via Zoom similarly takes a team. Overall, I think that the team running the Spring General Meeting did a good job, but we at QUFA are always open to feedback about how we might tweak the format to make it even more democratic. Please send suggestions directly to me. I am not sure if or when we will return to in-person meetings. If nothing else, virtual meetings seem to be very good for attendance. Hopefully, some of our colleagues are conducting research into the advantages and disadvantages of virtual meetings, but in the meantime, we need to continue to be flexible and patient with each

ANNOUNCEMENT

Voluntary Phased Retirement Program

The deadline to apply to begin a three-year phased retirement program in 2023 is **Fri. 1 July 2022**. You can find Infosheets, links, and recorded workshops about the program on the QUFA Web site:

<https://www.qufa.ca/member-services/pension-information/>

We will schedule a workshop for June. You will benefit most from this session if you have read the documents and reviewed the application.

other as we continue to adopt our operations to the new realities that the pandemic has brought us.

The pandemic has substantially altered our normal balance between teaching, research, and service. Now that we are into what are typically the more research-intensive months of the year, I hope that you find the time to regroup. I encourage you to be deliberate about taking time for self-care; build it into your routine daily. Make time to look after yourself and those you care about. Have a great summer, and I look forward to seeing you in the fall!

Jordan Morelli can be reached at morelli@queensu.ca.

BARGAINING ALERT!

Bargaining Is Underway

The team has been formed, the mandate has been approved, and bargaining for a new Collective Agreement has now begun

**By Leslie Jermyn and Amy Kaufman
Chief Negotiators, QUFA**

The current Collective Agreement (CA) with Queen's expires on 30 June 2022. The Executive named us as Co-Chief Negotiators in fall 2021, and we spent winter 2022 visiting units to hear your priorities and concerns, and to recruit a bargaining team.

The QUFA Bargaining Team is composed of the following people:

- **Amy Kaufman** (Chief Negotiator, Head Law Librarian)
- **Leslie Jermyn** (Chief Negotiator, QUFA Executive Director)
- **Gillian Akenson** (Research and Instruction Librarian, Humanities and Social Sciences)
- **James Stotz** (Physics, Engineering Physics, and Astronomy)
- **Ayca Tomac** (Global Development Studies)
- **Awet Weldemichael** (History)
- **Micheline Waring** (QUFA Member Services Officer)
- **John Rose (JR)** (QUFA Executive Assistant)

Together, the team built a mandate, which you can find along with other important documents on the QUFA Web site.¹ Since the mandate was endorsed by the Executive

Committee, the Council of Representatives, and the Members who attended the Spring General Meeting in April, the Bargaining Team has been working hard to organize and craft proposals to reflect our primary areas of interest:

- equity,
- adjunct matters,
- librarian and archivist terms,
- defending the academic workplace,
- procedural matters,
- QUFA business, and
- compensation.

The mandate, found under "Bargaining Resources" on the QUFA Web site, articulates what each of these areas includes. We encourage everyone to read it for context and perspective on this round of negotiations.

The composition of the Queen's Bargaining Team has been amended with the shift of Teri Shearer into the Interim Provost role, and is now as follows:

- **Dan McKeown** (Chief Negotiator, Associate Vice Principal, Faculty Relations)
- **Brenda Brouwer** (Senior Advisor, Academic Innovation, Faculty of Health Sciences)
- **Mark Asberg** (Vice Provost and University Librarian)
- **Lynda Jessup** (Vice-Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science)
- **Michael Villeneuve** (Director, Faculty Relations)

QUFA VOICES May 2022 (Volume 17, Number 7, Issue 106)

QUFA Voices is published by the Queen's University Faculty Association (QUFA), 9 St Lawrence Avenue, Kingston, Ontario, K7L 3N6, Canada (qufa@queensu.ca). It is distributed electronically to all QUFA Members via the QUFA-NEWSLETTER-L listserv. Past issues are archived on the QUFA Web site at <http://www.qufa.ca/publications/>.

QUFA Voices publishes QUFA-related news and information for QUFA Members and provides QUFA Members with a forum to express their QUFA-related ideas and opinions. We want to hear from you! Please send your QUFA-related story ideas, news items, opinion pieces, letters to the editor, photographs, and other submissions to the editor.

QUFA Voices is edited by Robert G. May. He can be reached at mayr@queensu.ca.

- **Jada McNaughton** (Senior Labour Relations Advisor, Faculty Relations)
- **Chris Clare** (Academic Labour Relations Advisor, Faculty Relations)

Both sides have kept their teams relatively small, which should aid in scheduling. Work on scheduling bargaining days has begun in earnest, and we hope to start meeting on 26 May 2022. We will have some full days in June, break for July vacations, and then resume in late July.

As we expect to bargain through the summer and past the expiry date of the current CA, please note that the terms and conditions outlined in the current contract continue to prevail until a new agreement is signed and ratified. This is particularly relevant for those applying for renewal, tenure, promotion, or continuing status, or considering an Academic Leave or the Voluntary Phased Retirement Program. The University has also confirmed that you can count on a Professional Expense Reimbursement amount equal to last year's. This amount may increase in the new contract, but you know its minimum level for planning purposes now.

We will send Bargaining Alerts by e-mail when we have more substantive comments to share, and these will also be archived on the QUFA Web site. We look forward to sharing updates and progress with you in the months to come.

Note

¹<https://www.qufa.ca/bargaining-2021-2022/>

Leslie Jermyn can be reached at qufaed@queensu.ca.

Amy Kaufman can be reached at kaufman@queensu.ca.

FYI

Spring General Meeting Recap

QUFA's Spring General Meeting took place on 21 April 2022

**By Leslie Jermyn
Executive Director, QUFA**

The Spring General Meeting agenda was densely packed with important items. If you were unable to attend the full meeting, here is a brief recap of what business was concluded.

1. Members passed a revised agenda that replaced the mask mandate motion requiring QUFA to advocate that Queen's retain the mask mandate indoors past 1 May 2022 with a motion requiring the same thing past 1 June. The 1 May version was ruled out of order because the action had already been completed. The revised agenda was approved by more than two thirds of those who voted.
2. Members endorsed the bargaining mandate as presented, with 99% in favour.
3. Members passed the 2022-2023 budget.
4. Members passed the motion compelling QUFA to oppose the adoption of the IHRA definition of antisemitism by Queen's. The motion does not ask us to oppose the definition; it requires that QUFA oppose the use of the definition at Queen's. The motivation here is that the definition in question, if adopted as *the* definition of antisemitism on campus or if written into University policy documents, could give rise to allegations of antisemitism that have the effect of constraining the legitimate exercise of academic freedom by Members who are critical of the state of Israel.
5. In considering the motion to compel QUFA to advocate for the continuation of mandatory

QUFA EVENTS RoR and RTP Workshops

QUFA RoR Workshop (Adjuncts)

We encourage adjunct members to join us for a discussion and Q&A about adjunct rights on **Mon. 13 June 2022, 11.00 a.m. ET - 12.30 p.m. ET**. Please RSVP to Micheline Waring (micheline.waring@queensu.ca) by Fri. 10 June 2022 for Zoom link.

QUFA RTP Workshop (Applicants)

We encourage tenure-track members to join us for a discussion and Q&A about the RTP process on **Mon. 13 June 2022, 1.00 p.m. ET - 2.30 p.m. ET**. Please RSVP to Micheline Waring (micheline.waring@queensu.ca) by Fri. 10 June 2022 for Zoom link.

QUFA RTP Workshop (Heads and Committees)

We encourage Heads and RTP Committee members to join us for a discussion and Q&A about the RTP process on **Mon. 27 June 2022, 11.00 a.m. ET - 12.30 p.m. ET**. Please RSVP to Micheline Waring (micheline.waring@queensu.ca) by Fri. 24 June 2022 for Zoom link.

masking on campus past 1 June 2022, Members passed an amendment to compel QUFA to advocate for the indefinite retention of a vaccine requirement. By then, the meeting had been extended twice and Members raised concerns that the amended motion was significantly different from that circulated to all Members, and that many people had left. The meeting was not further extended, which means this motion remains as unfinished business for the next General Meeting.

6. QUFA President Jordan Morelli committed to organizing a Special Meeting in May to conclude these discussions, and is working with the movers of the main motion and amendment to arrive at a fair process for debating these issues by 31 May 2022. This has been scheduled for 31 May. A limited agenda will circulate by 24 May.

We also heard from the president of the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA) Sue Wurtele, and enjoyed an excellent presentation on the state of Queen's finances from Mike White, who co-chaired the QUFA Ad-Hoc Committee to Review Queen's Finances and Budget.

Finally, new Executive members were elected as follows:

- **Vice President:** Cella Olmstead (Psychology)
- **Treasurer:** Valerie Bartlett (Smith School of Business)
- **Secretary:** Chantal Brunette (Dan School of Music and Drama)
- **Chair of Grievance Committee:** Constance Adamson (Library)
- **Co-Chair of JCAA:** James Stotz (Physics, Engineering Physics, and Astronomy)
- **Chair of PACC:** Robert G. May (English)
- **Continuing Adjunct Representative:** Melissa Houghtaling (Gender Studies)
- **Equity Representative:** Carolyn Prouse (Geography and Planning)
- **Member-at-Large (2-year term):** Gillian Akenson (Library)
- **Member-at-Large (1-year term):** Brad Weinberg (Employment Relations)

They will join those Executive members whose terms did not expire this year on 1 July.

Leslie Jermyn can be reached at qufaed@queensu.ca.

FYI Grievance and Mediation or Arbitration

What is grievance arbitration, and how does QUFA use it to resolve disputes involving its Members?

**By Leslie Jermyn
Executive Director, QUFA**

There are different approaches to the use of what is called *grievance arbitration*, referring to the option to file a formal allegation that one party has breached terms both parties have agreed to in a collective agreement or similar document.

One approach is to default to filing grievances as often as possible, whenever a party suspects a breach or for any breach, no matter how trivial, to “keep the other party on its toes,” as it were. Another is to use filing a grievance as a last resort when other problem-solving methods have failed. Both systems have their merits and costs.

Generally, the first method prevails in a climate of distrust between the parties, where attempts at problem-solving routinely fail to achieve results. If the parties do trust one another, they often prefer to reserve formal process for when informal ones fail. Trust in this context does not imply a belief that the other party is flawless or correct in their interpretations, but means that the parties are prepared to engage in honest discussion about matters under dispute with a view to resolving them if possible. In this climate, when informal resolution cannot be achieved, both parties generally welcome the opportunity to lay their case before a third-party arbitrator to achieve resolution and move on.

The Queen's-QUFA grievance process includes three conflict-resolution processes:

ANNOUNCEMENT Funding Deadline

The deadline to submit an application for the Fund for Scholarly and Creative Work and Professional Development (Adjuncts) is **Mon. 6 June 2022**. More information can be found here:

<https://www.queensu.ca/facultyrelations/qufa/research-fund>

1. **Informal Resolution:** One party or a Member raises a concern about an alleged breach of the contract. The parties attempt to resolve the matter without formal process.
2. **Step One:** One party files a formal complaint about the alleged breach and instigates a timed set of responses from the other party. A Member can also file a grievance at Step One but cannot proceed to Step Two unless QUFA assumes carriage of the grievance.¹
3. **Step Two:** The aggrieved party is not satisfied with the outcome of the Step One process and so elects to take the complaint to an arbitrator for decision.

Arbitration, sometimes referred to as *Med/Arb*, also has steps as follows:

1. **Mediation:** If the parties agree, the arbitrator uses the first day of hearings to try to mediate a resolution. They will assess the conflict on its face and try to persuade both parties to move from their position in order to resolve the problem. As mediator, the third party can reflect honestly with the parties about their chances of success at arbitration and the costs (monetary, time, human dignity) they will incur.
2. **Arbitration:** If the parties do not opt to mediate, or if mediation

fails, the arbitrator resumes their formal adjudicator role, and the parties proceed to present evidence and argument to convince them of their case. The arbitration concludes with the adjudicator writing their decision and sharing it with the parties.

Depending on the complexity of the case, arbitration can take a few days or many years. Arbitral decisions are public documents and can only be challenged via judicial review; there is no appeal to a new arbitrator.²

That's the process stripped of human content; the reality is rarely straightforward.

When there is an unequivocal breach of the collective agreement with no room for alternative interpretation, informal resolution usually does the trick: Party A alerts Party B; B investigates, finds the breach, fixes it or acknowledges it, and takes action to make sure it stops or is not repeated. Party A is satisfied and the matter is closed.

More often, Party A alleges a breach, and Party B investigates, only to find complicating factors or to respond with a reasonable alternative interpretation of the contract. When the breach involves individuals, the complicating factors may prove embarrassing or unflattering. Similarly, in defending people who have been subject to investigations into their behaviour, even when they do not merit the level of discipline they suffer, there may be elements of the story that they prefer to keep private. Being part of investigative, disciplinary, or grievance processes is stressful for many Members.

These more usual and more complex cases do make their way to grievance and arbitration, but they almost always resolve, usually at the Member's discretion, at the Mediation stage of Arbitration. That is because formal legal processes are

time consuming, and public arbitral decisions carry the risk of reputational harm. If the employer is willing to find a resolution that preserves the Member's dignity, the Member is likely to prefer that option. The union will rarely pursue a case with an unwilling primary witness, and so the matter appears to disappear.

QUFA has been successful in achieving many mediated solutions for Members, both individually and collectively. We also continue to be vigilant that Members' rights are respected. If you think your rights under the Collective Agreement have been breached, please contact Peggy Smith, QUFA's Grievance Officer, at smithpe@queensu.ca.

Notes

¹Having "carriage" means having control and responsibility for overseeing the handling of a legal matter like a grievance. When QUFA has carriage of a grievance, the Executive Committee has ultimate responsibility for deciding what happens to the grievance, including whether to withdraw it or pursue it to arbitration. Union carriage of grievances past Step 1 ensures that individual rights are balanced with collective rights and that the integrity of the full collective agreement is upheld. In other words, the union may elect not to grieve an individual's allegation of breach of rights if the remedy would damage collective rights.

²More information about how QUFA decides whether to pursue arbitration can be found under "Grievances" in this document: <https://www.qufa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/2022-QUFA-Policies-Protocols-April.pdf>

Leslie Jermyn can be reached at qufaed@queensu.ca.

GRIEVANCE CORNER

Working for a Safe and Healthy Workplace

There are numerous mental-health supports available to QUFA Members to assist them during difficult times

**By Peggy Smith
Grievance Officer, QUFA**

As we wind down another year of teaching under evolving COVID-19 rules, the shape of the pandemic and the rules of engagement are changing. Pandemic-related restrictions and directives from the government presented challenges for QUFA Members both at work and at home, but they did provide a structure and a rhythm we have come to rely upon. Get a vaccine. Work from home. Keep your children at home. Don't travel. Wear a mask in crowded indoor spaces. When spring arrives, go outside and remove your mask. Travel. Send your children to camp. Visit as many family and friends as possible. When students return to campus in September, repeat.

Next fall will be different. After two years of being told what to do, the provincial government, with the support of public-health doctors, are lifting the rules we have come to rely upon, including the mask mandate. Rather than a sense of freedom, many Members are experiencing stress and anxiety, and are seeking assurances from QUFA that we can help address that stress by fighting to maintain the mask mandate on campus. QUFA is taking all necessary steps to do so.

QUFA President Jordan Morelli and I have met with the Provost to request that Queen's maintain the status quo with respect to masks. We see no reason to remove this simple layer of protection only to have to reinstate it in the fall should the pandemic surge again. Furthermore, data collected by Morneau Shepell shows that one-third of workers are uncomfortable

and suffering from lower mental-health scores because of the decision to lift the mask mandate. The University has a legal obligation under the Occupational Health and Safety Act to take all reasonable steps to protect the mental health of our Members.

A special meeting is currently scheduled for 31 May 2022, at which time a motion to maintain the mask mandate will be voted upon. If passed, QUFA will take the request to the Provost again, this time with the weight of our membership's expressed request and hopefully letters of support from our union partners.

Regardless of the outcome of our lobbying efforts, I want to highlight some mental-health resources available to you as a QUFA Member that I strongly recommend you explore.

- Your Manulife benefits provide \$1,000 per year for mental-health services. The intent of this benefit is to offset the costs of developing a long-term relationship with an assigned counsellor. Manulife has the ability to recommend a longer term of treatment if needed, so do not hesitate to contact Manulife to discuss an extension if recommended by your health provider.
- The Employee Family Assistance Program (EFAP) is also available to QUFA Members. LifeWorks is an EFAP online resource. In contrast to the long-term counselling provided by Manulife, LifeWorks provides short-term targeted counselling as a proactive and preventative tool. Members are not capped at a particular number of counselling sessions but will be redirected to the Manulife benefit if they require a longer term of

treatment. Online resources are also available, covering a wide range of issues, including eating disorders for children, care for the elderly, nutrition, and fitness.

- If there are any questions about the quality or delivery of these services, Members can contact Mark Hluchan (mark.hluchan@lifeworks.com) directly to discuss their concerns.
- QUFA Members wishing to create a focus group about mental health in general or a particular topic are welcome to use the QUFA Zoom account to set up a group meeting. QUFA staff are available to attend if invited to answer particular questions or assist you in any way. If this is of interest to you, please contact Elizabeth Polnicky at the QUFA Office.
- Based on a recent survey, Queen's will be introducing a number of on-campus initiatives that provide staff and faculty the opportunity to take time for mental health. The first initiative is the creation of a community garden on campus behind Jeffrey Hall. Keep your eye open for further announcements and get involved.
- Finally, mental health is important. If you are struggling, you may require a sick leave or some formal accommodations to assist you in performing the essential duties of your job. Typically, this requires a note of support from your family doctor that you can pick up by contacting Sydney Downey (sydney.downey@queensu.ca) or myself.

Peggy Smith can be reached at smithpe@queensu.ca.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR QUFA Elections The Rules, and then the Rules....

QUFA Voices has agreed to publish this letter in full and without editing, as the author requested. Publication does not constitute our agreement with its content. QUFA rebuts some of the author's factual errors in an editorial note at the end of the letter.

The Editor:

I thank Elizabeth Hanson and *camarades* for having publicly displayed how QUFA functions better than any words of mine could.

There was "no time" according to "the rules" to allow me to finish my five-minute presentation as to why I was submitting my candidacy as Vice-President, in the only non-acclaimed position in this important election in these important times. Below were my reasons; the ellipsis ([...]) indicates where I was cut off, after a shortened three minutes. My suggestion that I be allowed to finish, and that my competitor take whatever time she needed, was rejected: "no time," "the rules," you know....

Despite the pressed time, somehow, "the rules" did not prevent the ex-president, granted more time to intervene than allotted to any of the candidates to present their platforms, to appear suddenly and unexpectedly, but with prepared text, at the ultimate moment before anyone voted, with slanderous "information" poisoning the well against one candidate, without context, and certainly without any right of rebuttal: the candidate was blacked out and muted.

You gotta wonder where QUFA learned its bullying management style....

The one honest thing Ex-President Hansen got right is that I am indeed

not a good fit to work smoothly with people who work like that.

This was my April 21 presentation at the election meeting, which I offer in integrality since there is now no *alleged* time constraint to censure it:

I'm afraid I'm trained as a logician and analytic philosopher—and I'm French—so I hope you will forgive me my frankness and very critical take. I mean no offense to any particular person nor to disrespect what QUFA members have been doing. I think it is a sign of our times that I feel I have to apologize in advance for being critical.

I am running for the vice-presidency of this union because I want to change many things, and I want to make this union relevant again to its members, most of whom are so disenfranchised from it that they don't even bother to show up to vote. Why show up? Everyone is acclaimed, always the same people year after year ... who do, or don't do, the same thing year after year.

It's time to do a cost-benefit analysis of this union.

The union earns 1.5 million dollars each year from its members.

You spend fully half that on salaries, for a union run by volunteers!

I understand why Elizabeth Polnicky gets a salary; we see what she does.

Other salaries are for lawyers. Why do we need salaried lawyers? We might understand if they were in-house counsel, involved in arbitration, but they are not. Because this union systemically refuses to arbitrate, despite admitting in its own statements about itself that arbitration is a union's fundamental purpose, and while being totally untransparent about its refusal to arbitrate. Indeed, the most recent defence of

the budget mentions the union's engagement in "arbitration/mediation".... Well, that's an untransparent hedge if there ever was one, when the "arbitration" proportion is zero. Arbitration is the only recourse a union has to hold power to account. And this union refuses to do it, thereby creating just the sort of environment where employee rights get neglected.

You spent \$65,000 a year of our money on travel, even during years of pandemic. Who is travelling? Where are they going? Why are they going there? And why does it cost \$65,000 a year to send a few people to occasional meetings in Toronto or Ottawa?

According to QUFA, it cost \$100,000—and a full day of arbitration—to get clear that an "and" in Article 22 was really an "or" Is this really how our money should be spent? Why wasn't Article 22 written perspicuously in the first place?

This union refuses to spend our money where our money would make the most difference in keeping the employer to account, where it would make the most difference to our colleagues here and across Canada. Indeed, the one member case that this union did arbitrate in its entire history (mine, because I had my own lawyer to hold the union's feet to the fire) is

[...]

already being used as a persuasive precedent in other Labour arbitrations going on in Canadian academia right now, that are driven by more conscientious unions ... more dutiful unions like LUFA, which defended Michael Persinger's right—hence all our rights—to fair and impartial workplace investigations, even though Persinger was dead. What did QUFA

ever do to protect our members from hired-gun investigations with predetermined outcomes? Another zero. So don't be surprised of such management abuses.

Meanwhile, you are accumulating a \$2.5-million surplus, adding to it half a million a year. Why? In anticipation of a job action? (If so, you should consult us with that use of our money, which should in that case be in a strike fund.) I think that if the union presented a stronger voice, instead of consistent and systemic appeasement, that might very well prevent the development of the need for a job action down the road.

I understand that mutual good will between union and management (often called "being in bed with") makes negotiating collective agreements nicer. But collective agreements are not worth the paper they are printed on unless defended. Management violates the collective agreement yearly on the backs of the members—see the many member grievances QUFA yearly agrees to carry (but not enough to arbitrate any). If the union used our money to defend the collective agreement aggressively, as is the main purpose of a union, it would be able to make credible threats to preclude management from these blatant yearly violations. But you can't make the only credible threat there is to make—take it to court—when you have consistently proven that you lack any gumption whatsoever to do it ... because playing nice with management (often called "throwing the member under the bus") makes negotiating collective agreements nicer ... for the lawyers this union pays hefty salaries to do the job for them.

Today our President tells us that the union "has always and will always follow the science" on COVID. Oh, really? Where was QUFA when the

university was petitioning precisely for an exemption from the science on COVID? While other unions in Ontario reacted, QUFA was conspicuously absent. And Kingston went from being the province's model city with respect to COVID containment, to being now its number one contagion site. Then, when the university wanted to abandon its masking policy, the QUFA President went along with that too, citing science! (As many have pointed out, Kieran Moore used to be a doctor; now he's a politician in Ford's government.) Fortunately, the university decided by itself to reverse itself on de-masking.

What have we heard from QUFA about the disastrous so-called "new" so-called "policy" (in fact, just a flowchart) on harassment and discrimination? This "policy" only guarantees that the future at Queen's will resemble the past, to wit, that people with credible complaints will be taxed as harassers and punished. (The more credible, the more harshly.) And QUFA will not defend them. (Indeed, QUFA itself will tax them as harassers for complaining about exactly that.) This is happening in a national context where more than 80% of faculty admit to censoring themselves out of fear of reprisals ... and in a local context where most, almost all, carried grievances concern minorities—all Queen's blather about commitments to DEI be damned.

QUFA maintains, with zero to show for it when push comes to shove, that it supports and defends academic freedom. Remember little Mort, that most scary "security threat" banned from buildings for outing fake news.... Remember Mike Mason, the historian whose brilliant career got rear-ended for reading in class from a historical book. The fact that you don't know what happened to them, hence

what to expect if like happens to you, should be of grave concern to you.

So I am running to insert new energy and renewed purpose into this union and to renew depleted commitment by members, by changing important things, some immediate and simple, that will enhance the protection of our members from indefensible yet real management and operational behaviours at Queen's.

This is why I ran (and got 11% of the votes of the less than 15% who bothered to show up).

But these words are too offensive to pronounce in these parts. I'm sure, Elizabeth, you can find "a lawyer" (especially one on your payroll) to claim that it is "harassment." Meh.

As my kids say: "Just another feather in your cap, Maman."

Adèle Mercier

Editorial Note: *We do not agree with Professor Mercier's characterization of Professor Hanson's point of information as either slanderous or bullying; Professor Hanson shared a fact relevant to QUFA operations that Members needed to know in advance of electing a Vice President. Had there been a constitutionally available alternative for managing the operational problem related to Professor Mercier's candidacy, we would have taken it.*

All candidates were advised in advance of the policy governing Executive position elections at virtual meetings; that policy is publicly available on the QUFA Web site.¹ The policy makes clear that, in contested elections, each candidate is allotted three minutes to speak. This policy has been in place since the Spring General Meeting of 2021.

Professor Mercier refers to two former Members on whose behalf QUFA grieved, and infers that they were not properly represented. The outcome of each case is confidential, but we can assure all Members that these Members were well represented and supported in the choices they made. That we do not publicize what happened to them speaks to the respect all QUFA staff and volunteers have for Member privacy and confidentiality. Please see Executive Director Leslie Jermyn's piece in the current issue of QUFA Voices for a fuller account of grievance processes.

As to amounts budgeted for travel during the pandemic, the 2021-2022 budget was prepared to accommodate the possibility that regular events such as CAUT Council or OCUFA Board might resume. As it turned out, actual travel and conference costs were only \$6,300 in 2020-2021 and \$2,014 in 2021-2022. The first number includes some expenses from the pre-pandemic period, and both numbers include virtual events that had registration fees and some space costs for QUFA meetings. Surplus in this budget line from 2020 formed part of the transfer to reserves in 2021, and 2021 surpluses have been used to bolster our preparations for bargaining this year. QUFA is an active participant in the governance of both our provincial and national bodies, and in normal times sends staff and members to relevant workshops, conferences, and sector meetings in order to stay abreast of changes in the sector and the law affecting it.

Note

¹See policy 1.8 (pp. 16-17) here: <https://www.qufa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/2022-QUFA-Policies-Protocols-April.pdf>