



QUFA VOICES

Your Queen's University Faculty Association Newsletter

WELCOME BACK ISSUE: September 2022

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PRESIDENT'S VOICE

Welcome Back to Our "Mask-Friendly" Workplace

The university's "mask-friendly" campus policy is contradictory and illogical, but QUFA Members have rights if they feel their workplace safety is being compromised

By Jordan Morelli
President, QUFA

I want to welcome you to the fall term, but it occurs to me that by the time you read this the fall term will be nearly one-third complete. In any event, I hope you had a restful and a productive summer.

There is a group of people, the QUFA Bargaining Team, whom I want to thank for foregoing much of the rejuvenation that the summer typically provides. They have been working tirelessly on our behalf to make improvements to the terms and conditions of our workplace, particularly for Adjuncts and for equity-deserving Members. Unfortunately, as you will no doubt be aware from reading the latest *QUFA Alert!* bargaining updates,¹ the university administration does not seem interested in working with us to improve our working conditions. This

QUFA IMAGES

Welcome Back BBQ!



Robert G. May

QUFA Office Administrator Elizabeth Polnicky welcomes QUFA Members, family, and friends to QUFA's welcome back BBQ at Breakwater Park this past September. Many thanks to the more than 100 people who attended QUFA's inaugural social event for the 2022-2023 academic year!

is particularly disappointing in the context of Bill 124, which puts wage restraints on all public-sector workers for a three-year period. In light of over 7% inflation, the Government of Ontario has effectively mandated that we all take a serious reduction in the real value of our income. After the incredible lengths QUFA Members went to during the pandemic to

ensure that the university administration continued to offer something passing for a quality education, often at the expense of our own physical and mental health, I believe that the university administration's refusal to engage meaningfully at the bargaining table shows a tremendous lack of respect

SAVE THE DATE

General Member Meeting

The QUFA Executive has called a General Member Meeting to discuss ongoing bargaining issues:

Wednesday 5 October 2022
9.00 a.m. – 11.00 a.m.
hybrid format
(in person and via Zoom)

Please watch your e-mail inbox for more details as they become available.

We look forward to seeing you at the meeting!

for all faculty, librarians, and archivists at Queen's.

You may recall that in the spring the QUFA Membership directed the QUFA Executive to press the university administration to impose an indoor mask mandate when classes resumed this fall. QUFA made a clear case to the administration, and they rejected it. Instead, they opted for a "mask-friendly" campus policy, whatever that means. The university administration has made it clear that QUFA Members have the right to require mask wearing by those with whom we interact in our offices, but we have no such right in our classrooms. Instead, the administration suggests that we politely explain the mask-friendly policy to students who might not

want to wear a mask—as if they hadn't themselves lived through the past two years of the pandemic—and request that they sit farther away, perhaps in the back corner of the room. Then, without any intermediate steps, our next recourse is to call Campus Security and Emergency Services. So much for the respect the university administration likes to talk about!

While this policy is both contradictory and illogical, and flies in the face of any reasonable effort to keep everyone safe by simply mandating masks in all indoor spaces, it is consistent with the rules set in place by the Government of Ontario through its Chief Medical Officer of Health. As such, there is very little that QUFA can do to effect change. The university administration has chosen to do what is easy, rather than implement what would be a non-intrusive measure that would help keep the Queen's community and the Kingston community safe, and perhaps even more importantly, that would protect those among us who are most vulnerable. That said, QUFA will continue to do what it can to press the administration on this important issue.

If you have a situation in which you think an accommodation might be necessary to keep you safe, please contact QUFA Grievance Officer Peggy Smith (smithpe@queensu.ca). Peggy has already had some success this term in obtaining accommodations for Members. In addition, if you encounter situations in which

students or others refuse your requests that they wear a mask, please let Peggy know. We want to be able to monitor this issue, and we could possibly bring an association grievance forward if there is evidence that it is a systemic problem. Finally, if you do find yourself in a situation outside your office, such as after class when a student wishes to discuss class material with you, it is QUFA's view that you absolutely have the right to insist on that person wearing a mask, and if they do not, that they maintain a 2-metre separation distance from you. In such situations, you have the right to refuse unsafe work, and a refusal on the part of the other person to respect your personal safety could constitute harassment. Please let QUFA know if this happens to you by contacting Peggy.

To end on a cheerier note, looking outside my office window, it gives me great comfort to see and hear the vibrance of the campus now that students have returned. The leaves are starting to turn an array of lovely colours, and the heat that is often oppressive in the still non-air-conditioned Stirling Hall has finally given way to more moderate temperatures. And the fall term break is only a couple of weeks away!

Note

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

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

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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.

PAST PRESIDENT'S VOICE

A Bad Moral Bargain

QUFA Members stepped up in a serious way during the COVID-19 pandemic, so why is the University refusing to step up for us during contract negotiations?

By Elizabeth Hanson
Past President, QUFA

A premise of collective bargaining is that, while interests of employees and employers do not perfectly align, they can be reconciled to some degree through negotiations in which both sides explain their needs and demonstrate their power to secure their accommodation. Of course, this account glosses over a lot: in the private sector the exploitative relation of employer to employees except where there are profit-sharing arrangements, and in the public sector the endlessly complicated layering of politics that ultimately determine the value assigned to the labour of teachers, healthcare workers, professors, administrative staff, and custodians. Nevertheless, for academic staff, the rosier account of collective bargaining is more plausible than it is in other sectors. Many of us feel that we have vocations rather than just jobs. The more the vocation and the job can be brought into alignment, the better the mission of our employer, the university, and our vocations can be fulfilled. Or at least so I have told myself.

In March 2020 when, like universities across the world, Queen's had to cease normal operations because of the COVID-19 pandemic, it seemed to me and others in the QUFA leadership that it was clear that we had to secure our Members' cooperation in a radical and rapid alteration in how the university operated, as well as to procure support from the University for what our Members were going to have to do. To that end, QUFA initiated negotiation with the

QUFA PEOPLE

Your QUFA Executive Committee 2022-2023

President	Jordan Morelli
Vice President	Mary (Cella) Olmstead
Past President	Elizabeth Hanson
Treasurer	Valerie Bartlett
Secretary	Chantal Brunette
Council Chair	Les Mackenzie
Grievance Chair	Constance Adamson
JCAA Co-Chair	James Stotz
Library and Archives Representative	Alicia Cappello
Term Adjunct Representative	Ayca Tomac
Continuing Adjunct Representative	Melissa Houghtaling
Equity Representative	Carolyn Prouse
Members at Large	Gillian Akenson Bradley Weinberg

QUFA sincerely thanks these QUFA Members for serving on the QUFA Executive Committee this academic year.

University to alter terms and conditions of our employment. In one weekend, Executive Director Leslie Jermyn went through the Collective Agreement (CA), inventoried the issues QUFA and the University would have to address, and drafted proposals that formed the basis for quick and effective negotiations of the COVID-19 Letter of Understanding (LOU). What followed these negotiations was often ragged and stressful. The University's decentralized administration meant that not all of its parts met their obligations equally, and QUFA had to push hard to prevent some ill-advised or unauthorized decisions. Certainly, there were inequities we were never able to remedy.

Mostly, though, the situation was just intrinsically desperate. I remember meeting with different groups of QUFA Members—parents of young children, heads of departments, new and recently hired faculty, and many more—and being aghast at what our Members were facing. The schools and day-cares were closed. Labs were inaccessible. Travel for research and

conferences was impossible. As spring 2020 progressed, it became clear that classes could not meet as normal in the fall, and that we were all going to have to “pivot to remote,” which meant acquiring and learning how to use new technology, and how to deliver material engagingly under these disrupted conditions. In other words, our Members were going to have to spend the time normally devoted to research to figuring out remote delivery. Adjuncts were going to have to do this with only a meagre bump up in compensation, certainly not enough to cover the additional time they had to put in. And then everyone was going to have to endure at least a year in which, having put in more effort than ever, many Members felt they did the worst job they had ever done—a situation depressing for everyone and terrifying for those who did not yet have permanent appointments.

To be sure, most of our Members did not suffer the loss of income or the exposure to COVID-19 that others did who could not work remotely. But precisely because for most of us our

ANNOUNCEMENT

Funding Opportunity for Adjuncts

The Fund for Scholarly Research and Creative Work and Professional Development (Adjuncts) will be accepting applications as usual with a deadline of Monday 3 October 2022 for the fall term. You are eligible to apply if you have an adjunct appointment at Queen's during the applicable term, and the application committee encourages you to do so.

Some examples of the very disparate requests that have been funded include attending conferences and workshops, travelling for archival research, developing artistic practice, and supporting new or ongoing research. You will find a list of the most recent recipients of the fund at the bottom of the application Web page, as well as descriptions from some adjunct faculty members about how they benefited from the fund. We welcome others to add their stories.

Please use the current application form indicated below. Using an old form may result in a denial of funding because the Committee may not be able to properly assess your application alongside the others. It is your responsibility to ensure your application is complete. Incomplete applications (missing pages or CV, incorrectly completed budget form, lack of signatures, etc.) will not be considered.

Please also pay attention to whether a stipend or research grant is the most sensible way for you request funding, as the Committee will not second-guess or change your choice. A stipend is paid and taxed like salary, whereas a grant is the reimbursement of actual expenses (please list researched and anticipated dollar amounts in your proposed grant budget).

The Committee tries to meet within a few weeks of the deadline, and decisions will be sent out from the Faculty Relations Office a few weeks after that meeting. Late applications are generally not accepted, but they may be considered if there are extenuating circumstances beyond your control.

Please pass this information along to other adjunct faculty members you know at Queen's in case their address has not yet been added to the e-mail list.

Please read the instructions carefully and use the updated online form, noting that this is now a fillable PDF application:

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

job is a vocation, the need to trudge on in conditions that made that shibboleth "excellence" feel so out of reach, meant that we paid a real spiritual price. When Members told me of the price they were paying, I responded that there was no choice. The University didn't cause the pandemic, and the University had to survive it because it is the platform on which all our endeavours rest.

And survive it did. Whatever the mental-health deficits you or your students might carry, the University posted a \$173.9-million budget surplus in spring 2022. (I think it's about \$133 million when you account for carry forwards.)

Now we are bargaining a new CA. Inflation is at 7.6%, and the across-the-board salary increases for QUFA Members have been below 2% for 10

of the past 11 years. (We got 2.5% in 2014.) The simplest and most appropriate way for the University to recognize what QUFA Members did for the University would be to halt the erosion of the value of our salaries. But the University is precluded from doing so by the Ford government's cap on public-sector salaries (Bill 124). Knowing that money was off the table, QUFA focused on workplace fairness. Two working groups prepared careful and comprehensive packages of proposals to improve working conditions for Adjunct Members, and to recognize the work performed by members of equity-deserving groups in helping to effect the transformations the University claims to seek. QUFA also tabled a "re-opener" clause to discuss money, should the constitutional challenge to Bill 124 succeed. The University has failed to engage meaningfully (and in fact has responded downright insultingly) to these proposals, including refusing to consider a re-opener clause—apparently so that it can treat Bill 124 as a windfall. Moreover, they have tabled a proposal that will "support" research by *requiring* Members to apply for external funding, whether they need it or not, and one to give the University copyright over materials you create in the course of teaching so that it can assist the Ford government in shrinking the complement of full-responsibility faculty. No increased fairness, just increased extraction.

So, call me naïve. I thought that in the last two years we were holding up our side of an implicit moral bargain, that the university's mission was ultimately our mission, too. If you were to ask me today how you should think about your relation to the University, I'd advise you, as always, to read Article 15, Academic Responsibilities. Then I'd probably talk about quiet quitting.

Elizabeth Hanson can be reached at hansone@queensu.ca.

VICE PRESIDENT'S VOICE

Bargaining Update on Student

Accommodations

QUFA has made numerous proposals to address Member workload in managing student accommodations, many of which are unresolved or have been rejected outright by the University

**By Mary C. Olmstead
Vice President, QUFA**

In preparing for the current round of collective bargaining, chief negotiators met with groups across campus to identify issues affecting the working conditions of our Members. Not surprisingly, many faculty expressed concerns about increasing workloads related to administrative tasks, such as those associated with student accommodations. In my own conversations, I was struck by the number of young faculty, particularly those in the first term of their appointment, who were both surprised and dismayed at the time required to deal with “non-pedagogical” aspects of their teaching. A more senior colleague, exasperated after spending a weekend organizing deferred exams, sent me an e-mail one Monday morning: “I’d like to have one of the deans sit beside me for the day so they can actually see how I spend my time.”

We all recognize that the last two years of COVID-19 infections and social isolation has had a negative impact on the physical and mental health of many students, but discussions around student accommodations preceded the pandemic. Indeed, in response to repeated inquiries from our Members, QUFA established an ad-hoc committee to examine student accommodations in 2019. A campus-wide survey and consultation with other faculty associations generated a list of recommendations to support

our Members in the management and implementation of student accommodations. These focused on three specific points: 1) workload; 2) our Members’ responsibility to maintain a positive learning environment for all students; and 3) the ability of our Members to evaluate students in an equitable manner while maintaining the academic integrity of their course.

The Student Accommodation Working Group met with the director of Queen’s Student Accessibility Services (QSAS) and presented the working group report to senior administrators, but none of the proposals were adopted or even seriously discussed. The new Ventus system is an incremental step in addressing some of these issues, but (at least to date) its primary use is logistical, organizing and categorizing types of accommodations within a class.

The Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC) requires academic institutions to accommodate physical and mental disabilities of students that are both permanent and episodic. Queen’s meets this legal obligation by transferring the responsibility to academic units. From there, the work is distributed in various ways, creating the familiar cross-campus disparity in dealing with a single issue. Some units hire full- or part-time staff to manage accommodations, some share resources with other units to accomplish this task, some dedicate TA hours to student accommodations, while others download all responsibilities to individual faculty. This lack of coordinated strategy places some instructors in the absurd position of using two different processes to deal with accommodations in the same class when students from different faculties are enrolled in the course. QUFA’s response, laid out in a bargaining proposal, is for the University to allocate equitable supports across campus for managing

QUFA VOICES
Voice Your Views!

If you have an opinion about anything you read in *QUFA Voices*, send us a letter to the editor!

mayr@queensu.ca

student accommodations. The University rejected this proposal.

When the Administration announced that they would table proposals to support research, we immediately recognized the connection to student accommodations. After all, what better way to support Members in pursuing their research than to relieve the burden of other work? As class sizes increase and student accommodations mount, the time to prepare multiple versions of assignments, rubrics, and marking keys has become unmanageable for many instructors. The issue was exacerbated in the spring when a number of students received retroactive accommodation for up to 80% of course material that was to be completed over the summer months (or later). Currently, there is no mechanism to relieve our Members of these responsibilities, even if the work extends into leaves or sabbaticals. Adjuncts faced with this situation are often forced to work beyond the termination of their contract. Unexpected teaching obligations that spill over to a new term disrupt our Members’ ability to effectively plan other aspects of their career, particularly research. As a first step to achieve the collective goal of enhancing the research profile at Queen’s, our bargaining team proposed that regular teaching faculty have a dedicated and protected research term. The University also rejected this proposal.

In addition to the extra workload, Members often express concern that academic integrity and/or intellectual

property rights may be compromised by specific accommodations. The use of Glean (a cloud-based transcription service for recording lectures and class discussions) is one example. Faculty may opt out of Glean, or any other audio-video recordings in their classes, for any number of legitimate reasons, including privacy concerns of other students in the class. Course policies that restrict the use of classroom recordings should be included in the course syllabus. Interim Vice Provost (Teaching and Learning) John Pierce has asked that all requests for exemptions from Glean be sent directly to him. He can be reached at vptl@queensu.ca. When a faculty member has agreed that a student accommodation may include Glean or other recordings, it is the responsibility of QSAS to ensure that the student and instructor have signed a privacy agreement addressing the limited use of the recordings and how these will be disposed of once the original purpose of the recordings has expired. QUFA, particularly our grievance officer, worked extremely hard to get the University to agree to this policy, but the broader issue of intellectual property remains unresolved at the bargaining table.

Finally, the responsibility to determine an appropriate accommodation does not lie with the instructor, although you may be asked to assist with particular tasks, such as posting a request for a notetaker. If a proposed accommodation is not a viable option for any assignment in your course, you should convey this information to the QSAS advisor. Even under these circumstances, you are not obliged to find an alternative accommodation plan. Indeed, faculty are not privy to information regarding a student's disability assessments (nor should they be), so it is not appropriate to expect an instructor to set up any accommodation plan.

Mary C. Olmstead can be reached at olmstead@queensu.ca.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health and Safety Bargaining Update

QUFA has been pressing the University to provide a safer workplace for Members, and QUFA Members should report unsafe conditions to the University or to QUFA

**By Nicolas Hudon
Health and Safety Officer, QUFA**

As Queen's activities resume, several health and safety issues have been raised by QUFA Members. QUFA has initiated several actions to ensure a safe work environment for its Members, which are detailed below. Information regarding health and safety issues, including the steps to raise a workplace concern, can be found on the Health and Safety page of the QUFA Web site.¹

Ventilation Issues

As indicated in the "President's Voice" column in the October 2021 issue of *QUFA Voices*,² ventilation, notably in classrooms, is still a significant problem for many of our Members. Following requests by QUFA, ventilation data for classrooms was made available.³ One would note that ventilation data is reported as of February 2022. The working assumption of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) is that, since the ventilation systems' operating conditions have not changed since the last measures, the measures would be the same as in February. We asked the University for more details about maintenance, and monitoring procedures and standards, and are still awaiting an answer.

Over the summer, problems and questions related to the maintenance of portable HEPA filters deployed during the pandemic were raised. Following a recent inquiry by QUFA, we obtained the concession that maintenance procedures and

schedules will be posted on the above ventilation Web page. If you observe that a portable HEPA filter unit is malfunctioning or not functioning, please contact Fixit (fixit@queensu.ca).

Beyond the COVID-19 pandemic, a recent case experienced by one of our Members reminded us that actions must be taken to ensure that the workplace is safe. While demonstrating the operation of a CO₂ measurement device to a large classroom, the instructor noticed that CO₂ levels were several times higher than the usually accepted values. As the measures were consistent (and problematic) in subsequent lectures, the instructor raised the issue to the department head and to the faculty dean. After more than a week without any result, the instructor brought the case to the attention of QUFA, and we took the case to EHS and Physical Plant Services. It was determined that the ventilation system was faulty and, after repairs, CO₂ levels came back to acceptable levels. For over a week, the instructor and the students were using a room under abnormal ventilation conditions without any warning or mitigation process in place. The QUFA Member is still monitoring CO₂ levels. We are currently preparing a formal inquiry to EHS to ask for procedures to be put in place if a Member measures a high level of CO₂ in a classroom, up to confirmation that such process could lead to work refusal. Ultimately, we would like to establish CO₂ measures as a proxy for ventilation measurements, an approach that could resolve the lack of reliable and consistent ventilation data on campus. In the meantime, if you wish to test CO₂ levels in your classroom, please contact QUFA President Jordan Morelli (morelli@queensu.ca). If you experience a problem, please contact your Joint Health Safety Committee (JHSC) representative (please see the list of representatives below) so that the issue can be brought to the JHSCs, an approach that has, by design, the

potential to force action from the employer.

Masks

Another important issue for our Members is the absence of a clear mask mandate on campus. It is our understanding that, under the current guidelines, QUFA Members cannot require students to wear a mask, even in spaces where safe distancing cannot be ensured. As the University is following the guidelines from KFLA Public Health, we have limited leverage on the issue. Following an inquiry by QUFA, EHS and Faculty Relations reiterated their position announced in late August 2022.⁴ QUFA Members were instructed as follows in a letter from EHS, dated 20 September 2022:

- In their own offices, Members may reasonably establish rules for masking;
- in other spaces where physical distancing cannot be maintained, it is suggested that Members refer others to the University's "mask-friendly campus" guidelines, and can call Campus Security and Emergency Services if they require assistance for an immediate and escalating situation; and,
- when other avenues have not resulted in resolution of a bona fide health and safety concern, EHS procedure SOP-Safety-14⁵ remains for Members to follow if they feel that continuing to work would be unsafe in the circumstances.

If you have any issues or concerns regarding masking, including the need for accommodations, please contact QUFA Grievance Officer Peggy Smith (smithpe@queensu.ca).

Addressing Health and Safety Concerns

We would like to remind QUFA Members of the potential avenues

QUFA PEOPLE Your JHSC Representatives

Administrative Services and Law	Shamel Addas	shamel.addas@queensu.ca
Arts and Science	Monika Holzschuh	monika.holzschuh@queensu.ca
Engineering and Applied Science	Nicolas Hudon	nicolas.hudon@queensu.ca
Library and Archives	Gillian Akenson	gillian.akenson@queensu.ca
Education	Rosa Bruno-Jofré	brunojor@queensu.ca
	Zabe MacEachren	maceache@queensu.ca
Health Sciences	Nicolas Hudon	nicolas.hudon@queensu.ca
Isabel Bader Centre	Dan Tremblay	tremblad@queensu.ca

available to them to address Health and Safety concerns:

- If you have urgent safety concerns on campus, please contact Campus Security (613.533.6111).
- For lack of disinfectant, personal protective equipment, etc., please contact Fixit (fixit@queensu.ca).
- For more complex health and safety issues that may require accommodations, please use the Internal Response System and contact your department or unit head.
- If you have not received a satisfactory solution, please get in touch with the QUFA JHSC Representative in your area (see box at right).
- You can also contact a member of the QUFA team for assistance (qufa@queensu.ca).
- You can invoke your right to refuse or stop work when you feel your health and safety is in danger, in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA).

OHSA requires the Employer to take all necessary steps to provide Members with a safe and healthy workplace. The statutory obligation of the Employer to provide a healthy and safe work environment is supported

by the JHSCs and enforced by the Ontario Ministry of Labour.

Needed: QUFA Member from the Faculty of Health Sciences for JHSC

We are looking for a QUFA Member to serve on the Faculty of Health Sciences JHSC, as prescribed by OHSAA. By law, the Member sitting on the JHSC must be named by QUFA Members. More information about JHSCs at Queen's can be found on Queen's Risk and Safety Services Web site.⁶ If you are interested or if you have questions about the workload associated with this committee, please contact me.

Notes

¹<https://www.qufa.ca/hs/>

²<https://www.qufa.ca/publications/qufa-voices/october-2021/>

³<https://www.queensu.ca/facilities/our-services/operations-maintenance/ventilation>

⁴<https://www.queensu.ca/covidinfo/covid-19-guidelines-ahead-fall-term-start>

⁵[https://www.queensu.ca/risk/sites/resswww/files/uploaded_files/EHS/SOPs/General%20Safety/SOP-Safety-14%20\(Refusal%20to%20Work\).pdf](https://www.queensu.ca/risk/sites/resswww/files/uploaded_files/EHS/SOPs/General%20Safety/SOP-Safety-14%20(Refusal%20to%20Work).pdf)

⁶<https://www.queensu.ca/risk/safety/general/joint-health-committee>

Nicolas Hudon can be reached at nicolas.hudon@queensu.ca.

ON THE WEB

Access QUFA Online

QUFA Members can interact online with QUFA in many different ways!

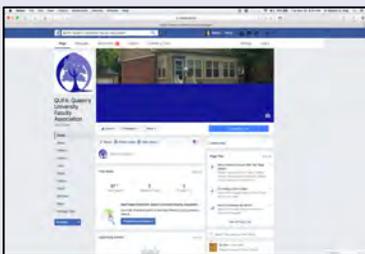
QUFA's online resources contain a wealth of information about your faculty association, including upcoming events, information about the collective agreement, news items of interest, and more!

1. QUFA Web Site



www.qufa.ca

2. QUFA on Facebook



www.facebook.com/qufapage

3. QUFA on Twitter



www.twitter.com/qufatweet

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S VOICE Bill 124: Wage Restraint Legislation

What is Bill 124, and how is it affecting the current round of negotiations for a new Collective Agreement?

**By Leslie Jermyn
Executive Director, QUFA**

Bill 124 became law in 2019. The name of the legislation is *Protecting a Sustainable Public Sector for Future Generations Act*. In effect, this legislation caps most public and broader public-sector salary increases to 1% for three consecutive years in the first contract negotiated after the passage of the legislation (5 June 2019). The wage restraint applies for three years regardless of the length of the contract negotiated, so a one-year deal would require us to negotiate a second restrained contract the next round until there had been three years of capped compensation. Municipalities are excluded, which has the effect of excluding fire and police services, so the bill does not impact the full public sector.

QUFA signed the 2019-2022 Collective Agreement (CA) in late 2018, before Bill 124 was passed, and so we did not have to negotiate wage caps at that time. The current CA does have to comply with the legislation, as there is no end date in the Act. There is also no exemption for high rates of inflation or other considerations.

Our provincial association, the Ontario Confederation of Faculty Associations (OCUFA), is part of a broad union coalition challenging the legality of the Act with respect to its impact on the constitutional right of free association. This is the right that guarantees Canadians the ability to create and join unions to collectively negotiate their terms of work. The argument, in a nutshell, is that in constraining what a union can bargain for (i.e., wages), the Act limits the



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Premier Doug Ford's Bill 124 caps public-sector salaries at 1% for 3 years. This controversial piece of legislation means that QUFA is unable to negotiate a wage increase of more than 1%, despite soaring inflation. A broad coalition of public-sector unions is now challenging the constitutionality of Bill 124 before the Superior Court.

right of free association and so is unconstitutional. The Superior Court is currently hearing this case.

QUFA has not yet tabled its compensation proposal, but we are working with Raven Law to ensure that we make the best use of the limited resources available to us under this legislation. We have also sought to make improvements in other parts of Members' working lives in acknowledgment of the loss of purchasing power this wage restraint will effect in the next three years.

Finally, in lieu of the court action, we have tabled a "re-opener" clause that says that, if the Act is repealed, no longer applies to our sector, or is found unconstitutional after a new CA is signed, we can return to the negotiating table to bargain for higher salary increases. So far, Queen's has told us they are not interested in signing this agreement to reopen. Without it, even if the legislation no longer applied to us, we would be compelled to live with the low salary increases for the full three years of the new contract.

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

GRIEVANCE CORNER Same Pandemic, Different Rules

The University's "mask-friendly" approach is confusing and stressful, but QUFA Members can assert their workplace health and safety rights

**By Peggy Smith
Grievance Officer, QUFA**

Welcome to the new academic year! Though the COVID-19 pandemic continues, the University has followed the provincial approach of lifting the mitigation policies that helped to minimize the spread in classrooms and other close spaces on campus. The result is an inequitable approach to health and safety that is confusing, time-consuming, and stressful.

In addition, the new year coincides with the negotiation of a new Collective Agreement. If you have been following the *QUFA Alert!* bargaining updates, and I strongly encourage you to do so (see box at right), you know that the University has been slow to respond to the hard work of the QUFA negotiating team, leaving questions about whether the existing workplace inequities for Adjuncts and Members of equity-deserving groups will be addressed or left on a shelf to linger.

During this time, QUFA staff continue to work closely with the volunteer members of the QUFA Executive to ensure that your existing rights are protected and enforced. Please do not hesitate to contact me on a confidential basis if you have questions about your rights and how to assert them.

The QUFA Grievance Committee is actively seeking new members. If you are interested, please contact Committee Chair Constance Adamson (adamsonc@queensu.ca)

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

EDITOR'S VOICE QUFA Voices Is For You!

Submit your ideas, opinions, or letters to your monthly faculty association newsletter

**By Robert G. May
Editor, QUFA Voices**

Because this is the first issue of *QUFA Voices* for the new academic year, I would like to offer a warm welcome to QUFA Members both new and returning. I hope you're all looking forward to another great year, including those who are working remotely.

I would also like to let you know that *QUFA Voices* is your official faculty association newsletter. *QUFA Voices* is so named because an important part of its mandate is to provide a forum for QUFA Members to express their opinions, to share their views, and to let their voices be heard.

If you have an idea for a story or profile, if you have an opinion you wish to express, or if you have an announcement you think will be of interest to other QUFA Members, please send it to me. *QUFA Voices* appears once a month during the academic year.

I would also like to invite you to print out and post a copy of *QUFA Voices* in a visible place in your department or unit. This will enable us to reach even more Members than the e-version alone.

If you have missed an issue of *QUFA Voices*, you can always find back issues of the newsletter on the QUFA Web site (under "Publications"). I invite you to go back and see what we've been up to for the past few years. I look forward to hearing from you!

**Robert G. May can be reached at
mayr@queensu.ca.**

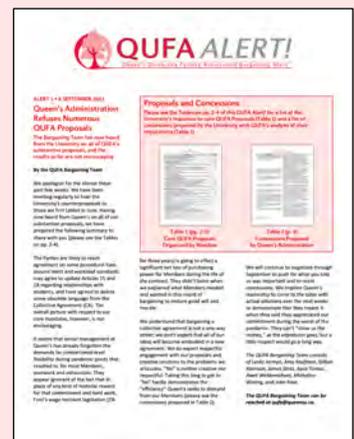
QUFA ALERT! Stay Up-to-Date with QUFA Alert!

QUFA Members can get the latest information on the current round of bargaining by reading *QUFA Alert!* bargaining updates. Watch for them in your e-mail inbox, or access them on the "Bargaining" page of the QUFA Web site:

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

Recent *QUFA Alert!* bulletins include:

- **Bargaining Has Begun** (23 June 2022)
- **All Substantive QUFA Proposals Have New Been Tabled** (30 June 2022)
- **Two Proposals from the University** (2 Aug. 2022)
- **The Library and Archives Issue** (8 Aug. 2022)
- **Queen's Administration Refuses Numerous QUFA Proposals** (6 Sept. 2022)
- **Bargaining Continues, with QUFA Presenting Numerous Counterproposals** (23 Sept. 2022)



Questions or comments about bargaining? Contact the QUFA Bargaining Team, at qufa@queensu.ca.



QUFA WALKS

Queen's University Faculty Association

Please join the
Queen's University Faculty Association (QUFA)
for a guided walking tour of Queen's main campus



Thursday 6 October 2022

gathering at 1.15 p.m.
walking at 1.30 p.m.

beginning at
The Indigenous Peoples Commemorative Plinth
(on McGibbon Walk between Douglas Library and Ontario Hall)



**Learn about Queen's history and current affairs, the role of faculty and QUFA
on Queen's campus, and meet other QUFA Members**

Please RSVP to ep43@queensu.ca by Tues. 4 Oct. 2022 at 12.00 noon

The tour will take about two hours and will be followed by

Quaff with QUFA
3.30 p.m. – 5.00 p.m.
The Main Bar and Patio, The University Club