

# MUFA Newsletter

October/November 2010 — Volume 37.2 — John Berlinsky, Editor

## Assigning Teaching and Administrative Loads

Mike Veall

One of the hardest positions in the university is to be a chair or director. McMaster is fortunate that so many able people take on this difficult task. One part of the job is the assignment of faculty workload. While mostly this goes smoothly, sometimes there is friction, occasionally rising to the grievance level involving MUFA. Not all of these problems are the fault of a chair or director, but my colleagues on the MUFA Executive and I thought we would sketch some tentative suggestions as to what best practice might be. In cases where there are apparent problems, perhaps these suggestions will stimulate thinking as to how the existing workload assignment process might be changed.

1. We believe that faculty should be consulted in advance about teaching/administrative loads before they are assigned. My own department distributes a form each year to elicit teaching preferences. I was surprised to learn that not every department has such a mechanism. It seems likely that there will be a closer alignment of preferences and outcomes if preferences are known than if they are not known. It also seems likely that many faculty will do a better job teaching in areas that they prefer. Of course not all preferences can be met. It is incumbent on faculty to understand this and be as flexible as possible, provided that any previous undertakings and the conditions of appointment are being respected.
2. Some year-to-year stability in the allocation of specific courses and administrative loads is desirable. It is obvious that faculty will often do a better job, plus have more time for research, if they are allowed to repeat some courses. This is not to say that a faculty member should be given perpetual "ownership" of a course that other faculty, including new faculty, may want. Again referring to my own department, customarily all new tenure-track appointees are given the grad course in one of their areas as part of their initial teaching load.
3. Chairs and directors should take the issue of workload equity seriously, as this is often the root of discontent. An important part of this is to make sure that allocations and the allocation process are as transparent as possible.
4. We believe that academic units have a shared responsibility to protect tenure-track/teaching-track faculty from extra tasks that might unduly impede progress to tenure/permanence. This does not mean individuals on this path should have no administrative work, but that the administration assigned should be appropriate and no more time-consuming than the appointee might reasonably have expected upon hiring. We also admire chairs and directors and their academic units who help contractually limited appointees achieve career success, as difficult as that can be in the current environment.

### IN THIS ISSUE:

- 1 Workload
- 2 Notes from the President
- 3 Installation of President Deane
- 4 Remuneration Update
- 4 Pension Deficits
- 5 Gordon Means
- 6 Project Status Report
- 7 MUFA General Meeting
- 8 Announcements

### McMaster University Faculty Association

Hamilton Hall, Room 103A  
Hamilton, Ontario L8S 4K1

905-525-9140, EXT. 24682

FAX: 905-522-8320  
mufa@mcmaster.ca

**MUFA on the WEB**  
<http://www.mcmaster.ca/mufa>

# Notes from the President

Virginia Aksan

There are a number of questions that your MUFA Executive has addressed this fall. The first one concerns the **Travel Process Review Implementation Committee**, which has been conducting a pilot program of an online travel expense report with several departments on campus. Concur, with headquarters in the United States, is the system being tested. Some of our colleagues raised legitimate concerns on mufagabmac about privacy, as data stored in the US is subject to the Patriot Act. Bonny Ibhawoh, who has been our MUFA representative on the implementation committee, responded to mufagabmac members that the Committee had discussed the privacy question at length, but settled on Concur as the only alternative then available. The paper system was to remain in place as an alternative.

Since that time, Lilian Scime, Chair of the Travel Process Review Implementation Committee, has reassured me that the work of the Committee is not finished. The pilot project is nearing completion, and she will be reassembling the Committee to discuss wider implementation. In Bonny Ibhawoh's absence (he is on leave 2010/11), we have asked Executive Committee member Michele Dion to continue MUFA representation on the Committee. As it stands now, the paper system will remain an option. Stay tuned.

We also raised the question of privacy and the US Patriot Act with the Administration. I understand that there has been discussion among academic administrators at the provincial level, especially around Google, which a number of campuses in Ontario are using as local search engines and for email. The fact is that many of us are on Google gmail, it too subject to US scrutiny. As far as we know, there has been no coordinated effort to address the issue.

## WORKLOAD

Under the general rubric of "workload," we have had a number of communiqués and discussions with members about teaching assignments, workload equity, teaching-track positions, classroom conditions and technology, from powerpoint to podcast. In the recent Remuneration Survey (see report on p. 4 by Herb Schellhorn in this issue), many of you took

time to comment on precisely these issues. They continue to be a concern of your Executive.

One response, by Executive Committee member Mike Veal, is in this Newsletter (see, "Assigning Teaching and Administrative Loads", on p. 1). As another response, MUFA will continue to press the Administration for an increase in the full-time, tenure-track complement, especially in a provincial environment stressing accessibility for some additional 30,000 students to the Ontario university system. Please do not hesitate to raise these issues with us, or initiate a discussion on mufagabmac-l.

## HEQCO: HIGHER EDUCATION QUALITY COUNCIL OF ONTARIO

Discussion is underway in government circles of a serious transformation of the Ontario university system, based on a study called *Academic Transformation: the Forces Reshaping Higher Education in Ontario*, by Ian D. Clark, Greg Moran, Michael L. Skolnik, and David Trick (McGill-Queens University Press, 2009). The authors stress differentiation and accessibility, both words loaded with implications for McMaster as a comprehensive university. HEQCO, headed by former McMaster Provost and University of Calgary President Harvey Weingarten, the new post-secondary advisory agency of the province, is setting the agenda.

Most of you will have seen the call from President Deane to join him in a town hall discussion of the first of many expected HEQCO studies, *The Benefits of Greater Differentiation of Ontario's University Sector: Final Report*, by Harvey Weingarten and Fiona Deller. (see invitation in this issue on p. 3). I urge you strenuously to read the study, look at OCUFA's response

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/mufa/OCUFAResponse-HEQCODifferentiation-Oct.26,2010.pdf>

and take the time to attend this session. The President has repeatedly indicated his interest in making sure that McMaster positions itself wisely for this new round of provincial intervention in the university sector. For that, he needs our support and engagement.

## Installation of President Deane

On Friday, November 19, Patrick Deane was installed as McMaster's 7<sup>th</sup> President in a ceremony filled with ritual and significance. The new President was welcomed by representatives of government and other universities, along with faculty, staff and students from McMaster. Speaking for MUFA, Past-President, John Berlinsky, delivered the following message:

*Mr. Chancellor, honoured guests, colleagues, graduands, families and friends of McMaster, I am here today representing the faculty of McMaster University to welcome our new President, Patrick Deane. McMaster's faculty, like faculty everywhere, are a diverse group, representing many disciplines and many points of view, more often than not conflicting. And so it is significant that this group stands united in welcoming Patrick Deane — a humanist and a scholar, a seasoned administrator and a committed colleague — as their new President.*

*So we welcome you today, Patrick, at the start of this new journey. It's great to have you on board.*

President Deane's speech, which can be found at <http://dailynews.mcmaster.ca/story.cfm?id=7065>, focused on education as integrity, academic freedom and civility, global citizenship, and service to the community.

Dear Chairs, Deans, Student Leaders, and all Faculty,

You are likely aware that a number of publications have recently appeared which take as their subject possible changes in the university system in Ontario.

I invite you to join me in an open discussion of the latest, and perhaps most significant of these, the new HEQCO report, "The Benefits of Greater Differentiation of Ontario's University Sector". A copy of this report can be downloaded at <http://www.heqco.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/DifferentiationENG.pdf>

The discussion will take place as follows:

Date: Wednesday, November 24, 2010  
Time: 10:30 am - 12:00 pm (noon)  
Location: Gilmour Hall, Council Room 111

All faculty is welcome, therefore please be sure to forward this invitation to all your faculty members. This invitation has already been sent to all Deans and Student Leaders.

Thank you.  
Patrick Deane



John Berlinsky and CAW 555 President Matt Root robe the new President (photo reproduced by permission of *The Hamilton Spectator*)

## Remuneration Update

Herb Schellhorn

Since the last *Newsletter*, the Remuneration Committee has conducted a benefits/working conditions survey to determine remuneration priorities and has met with the MUFA Council (with representation from each department). In the survey, we received an excellent 522 responses with many useful additional comments. This survey, like the one conducted in 2007, indicates that work environment continues to be a high priority for members. This is not too surprising as lack of faculty renewal has resulted in McMaster having one of the highest student faculty ratios among comparator universities.

The Remuneration Committee has met to discuss the results of the survey and is currently preparing a remuneration brief which will be submitted to the membership for approval at the General Meeting in January. The General Meeting will offer an opportunity to talk about status of remuneration talks at neighbouring universities and to review our own priorities here at McMaster. Negotiations at two important comparator universities have recently concluded. University of Toronto Faculty Association (UTFA), in an arbitrated settlement, reached a two-year agreement in which across-the-board increases averaged 2.4% per year. As the pension deficit situation at Toronto is far more serious than here at McMaster, it is particularly interesting that the arbitrator ruled against further increases in contribution rates, a strongly contested goal for the Toronto administration. The University of Western Ontario recently concluded an agreement in which the across-the-board increases totaled 8.82% over four years.

The provincial wage restraint initiative of last summer is becoming increasingly less relevant in all public sector negotiations. As President Deane noted during the October Senate meeting "(the government's goal)...was a difficult expectation to reconcile, particularly given the universities traditional independence in establishing their own compensation programs...."

Please write to me if you have any thoughts regarding the remuneration process at [schell@mcmaster.ca](mailto:schell@mcmaster.ca). All comments will be received in strict confidence.

## Dealing with Pension Deficits

John Berlinsky

On November 5, I had the opportunity to attend a workshop, organized by OCUFA, on the state of Ontario university pensions.

Many Ontario universities, particularly those with DB (defined benefit) and hybrid pension plans have been worried about the fallout from the financial crisis. In particular, they presently have large deficits, both on a going concern (G-C) and solvency basis, which they fear could eventually lead to crippling mandated deficit payments. The most serious concern is with regard to solvency deficits, which would require large incremental payments, over and above the G-C payments. These universities have been lobbying the Ontario government through the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) for solvency relief, and the government has responded positively to their pleas as was explained at the workshop.

At the same time, faculty and other university employees are concerned about the health and sustainability of their pensions. There is a fear that university administrations will transfer more of the financial burden and risk onto plan members or simply try to get out of the business of sponsoring pension plans.

The Province has acted twice, first in 2009 and then again this year, to address the distress caused by the financial crisis on the state of pensions. In 2009 it proposed allowing plans to extend schedules for repaying solvency deficits for up to 10 years with the permission of the plan members. However there was little buy-in to this approach by employers, and in 2010, in response to requests from the COU, the Province introduced a new approach for universities, involving an interesting two-stage process.

The idea is that, without seeking plan member approval, the university would file some kind of plan with the Province and would then automatically qualify for a 3-year grace period during which it would be required to fund only the interest on the solvency deficit — not the deficit itself. During the grace period, the university would be expected to negotiate a longer term agreement with its

*continued on next page*

employees that would meet certain metrics that the government has proposed. The metrics are:

- increased payments, *split 50-50 between employers and employees*, to cover the full cost of G-C or solvency deficits, whichever is larger, over the next several years, or
- move to a jointly sponsored plan, or
- convert to a defined contribution plan.

If the negotiated plan meets the government's metrics then the university will have a further seven years to deal with its solvency deficit.

A number of important issues for McMaster arise from Bill 120:

1. What plan will the University submit following its next, July 1, 2011 valuation?
2. How will the following 3-year period overlap with future bargaining?
3. Could some other kind of plan be developed for resolving the pension deficit problem which would better meet our needs?

Stay tuned for future developments.

## Gordon Paul Means

### Professor Emeritus, Political Science (1927-2010)

Gordon Means passed away August 12 at home, peacefully in his sleep, after a short but courageous battle with ALS. A member of McMaster's Political Science Department from 1967 until his retirement in 1992, he achieved world-wide recognition for the extent and breadth of his scholarship and publications, and was honoured in 2004 as one of the outstanding intellectuals of the twenty-first century.

Gordon spent much of his early life in Southeast Asia, where his parents, Paul and Nathalie Means, were Methodist missionaries, and continued to work with them toward the development of schools and medical facilities among the Sengoi and Temier, aboriginal peoples in northwest Malaysia. He continued his parents' dedication to these people through many contributions, including publication of the first Sengoi and Temiar dictionaries (1986, 1998). Three days before he died he completed an edition of his father's notes, fragmentary manuscript, and photographs describing his parents' work among the Sengoi from 1931 to 1980 (published *Armour*, November 2010).

After Gordon's military service in the US navy, he pursued his PhD in political science at the University of Washington, eventually acquiring a specialization in Southeast Asian politics through first-hand research in the area and an extensive list of internationally recognized publications, most recently the widely acclaimed *Political Islam in Southeast Asia* (Lynne Rienner 2009). Gordon

taught, among others, at the universities of Washington, Iowa, Sumatra, Beijing, Singapore, Malaya, Brock, Hamlin, Gustavus Adolphus, and the University of Minnesota's Institute of International Studies. He and his wife, Laurel, settled in Chaska after her retirement in 1996, partly to retrace his roots back to Long Prairie in Todd county, where his great-grandfather, Jonathan Toms, had been a pioneer settler and Civil War veteran of the Minnesota Third Regiment.

Gordon lived both academic and personal life to the fullest, whether writing, lecturing, researching, enjoying family camping, strenuous canoeing in the Boundary Waters, fast-paced golfing, or competing even faster on the tennis court. He was an active member of Discovery United Methodist Church, Chanhassen, serving there in several administrative capacities. Chaska's Jonathan Association also shared his interests and concerns, a political commitment bringing him their "Apple Award" in 2009. Yet he was known essentially as a humble man, generous with both knowledge and hands-on help. Although much missed, he will long be remembered for these and his many other gifts — meticulous standards for teaching and scholarship, family devotion, humour, and an unerring practical sense.

Gordon is survived by his wife, Laurel; four children: Kristin, Norval (Laila), Erik (Anne), and Kaia; stepchildren Adrian Braswell, Julia Reiners (Paul), and Eric Braswell; and eight grandchildren.

### Other Passages

Owen Morgan, French, September 1, 2010



# Project Status Report

(as of November 17, 2010)

Project Name	Estimated Completion Date	Approved or Anticipated Budget	Status
<b>Project &amp; Budget Approved</b>			
Nuclear Reactor/NRB Renovations	March 2011	\$22,000,000	Steel structure complete. Roofing has commenced. Concrete floors complete. Mechanical and electrical rough-ins continuing. Exterior cladding and interior partitions have commenced. Schedule is being monitored and controlled to meet KIP timelines.
IWC Centre for Spinal Cord Injury Education, Research & Rehab and Centre for Cancer Education, Research & Rehab	March 2011	\$20,000,000	Micropile work complete. Excavation complete. Foundation footings complete. Mechanical infrastructure work has started. Schedule is being monitored and controlled to meet KIP timelines.
GH Data Centre Upgrades	November 2010	\$2,400,000	Emergency power details being finalized and coordinated. Awaiting delivery of first shipment of computer equipment.
McMaster Innovation Park: Centre for Primary Care	Summer 2012	\$40,000,000	Schematic design complete. Projected costs exceed the preliminary business plan. Options under consideration.
IAHS Renovations	November 2010	\$2,260,000	Project substantially complete. Turnover to Faculty by end of November.
McMaster Front Entrance Improvements - Phase 2	Pending	\$4,900,000	Safety aspects under review as presented to the Committee.
MUMC Biosafety Lab 3 (FHS)	Pending	\$2,500,000	Biosafety commissioning agent working with engineer to finalize drawings.
MUMC Farncombe Family Digestive Health Research Inst.	Summer 2010	\$5,500,000 (rev Nov/09) — \$3,500,000	Project is substantially complete. Faculty has moved in and area is operational. Deficiency work remaining.
<b>Other</b>			
City of Hamilton Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Tank	Fall 2010	City of Hamilton Project	Clean up and restoration continuing.
McMaster Innovation Park CanMet Building	Fall 2010	MIP Board approval to proceed with sourcing of financing & finalization of lease	Substantial completion November 11. Occupancy anticipated for November 15. Forty employees moving from Ottawa with approximately 120 positions in total to be filled over time
<b>For Future Consideration</b>			
McMaster Innovation Park Life Sciences Building		\$45,000,000	MIP developing concept design

GSA Refectory			
Above Ground Parking Structure			No longer under consideration.
PanAm Games New Pool		est. \$35,000,000	On-going discussions with HostCo Board of the PanAm Games.
Sports Arena			Offsite Location. No active discussion.
Tennis Courts		unfunded	No active discussion. Low priority.
<b>MTCU Long-Term Capital Planning</b>			
Wilson Building for Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences (Liberal Arts Building) [inclusive of deferred maintenance for CNH/KTH/ TSH]	2014	\$95,000,000 (rev May/10) — \$50,000,000 to \$60,000,000	Revised submission to MTCU in June 2010. Functional Plan completed. Met with Ministry in late October to review.
Life Sciences & Health Complex (LHS)	2014	\$141,500,000	Revised submission to MTCU in June 2010

# Mark Your Calendars



## MUFA General Meeting

Thursday, January 13, 2010  
2:30 pm

Council Chambers (Gilmour Hall 111)

This Newsletter is published monthly between September and May by the Faculty Association at McMaster University. The Association's Executive for 2010/11 is composed of the following members:

President	Virginia Aksan
Vice-President	Peter Sutherland
Past-President	John Berlinsky
Academic Affairs	Nancy Bouchier
Human Rights	Michelle Dion
Membership	Marek Niewczas
OCUFA Director	Peter Sutherland
Pension	Khalid Nainar
Public Relations	John Berlinsky
Remuneration	Herb Schellhorn
Spec Enquiries & Grievances	Graeme Luke and John Weaver
Tenure	Martin Dooley
Treasurer	Gladys Peachey
Without Portfolio	Mike Veall



Executive Director	PhyllisDeRosa Koetting
Administrative Assistant	Kelly McCaughey
Returning Officer	Matheus Grasselli

Opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of the authors and do not represent the views of the Association or of its Executive unless so specified. Anyone wishing to contribute to the MUFA Newsletter is invited to send submissions to the Faculty Association Office (HH-103A, e-mail: [mufa@mcmaster.ca](mailto:mufa@mcmaster.ca), ext. 24682). Deadlines are the 15th of each month. All submissions will be published at the discretion of the Editor.

Current and past issues of the MUFA Newsletter are posted on the MUFA website ([www.mcmaster.ca/mufa](http://www.mcmaster.ca/mufa)).

## Welcome New Members

**Thomas Adams**

**Francisco Perez-Pinal**

**Nemanja Stefanoiv**

**Michael Surette**

Chemical Eng

Electrical & Comp Eng

B-Tech Programme

Medicine

Many thanks to **Michelle Dion** (Political Science) for agreeing to represent MUFA on the Travel Process Review Implementation Committee.