

MAY 1996, VOLUME 22.7, Robert H. Johnston, Editor

# Executive Committee for 1996/97

The terms of office of the [Executive Committee for 1996/97](#) began on April 29, 1996.

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## President's Report

(delivered at the April 22, 1996 Annual General Meeting)

"Even in an era of reduced government funding, we must continue to identify and reward those whose work achieves new heights of research and scholarship, whose teaching attains high levels of performance, and whose valuable contributions allow us to serve our clients more effectively" (*Directions*, McMaster University, p. 4, approved by the Senate and the Board of Governors, December 1995).

Our organization, MUFA, has spent a great deal of this past academic year, as we have so much in the past, trying to get the University, the government and society to see that "Rewarding Accomplishment" is at the heart of the successful university. This is as true for faculty and academic librarians as it is for students and support staff.

It is for this reason we have fought so hard to get the University administration to live up to its commitment to fund the Career Progress/Merit (CP/M) Plan. This goal has been at the top of our remunerations agenda, even to the point of conceding short-term budget relief to the administration þ next year it will be \$7 million because of the combination of temporary non-replacement of faculty leaving McMaster (approximately 100 in my count) and over 1.2% temporary salary cut in exchange for 3 "Harris Days".

While we were able to make some headway on this goal, it is regrettable that only half of our merit for 1994 has been funded so far and unfortunately we have received only 8/11ths of our CP/M funding for 1995. I hope next year's Remunerations Committee will be able to get the remain half merit for 1994 and the 3/11ths merit for 1995.

Rewarding merit has other meanings as well. I think we are making progress on resolving the unfortunate CAWAR problem in the Health Sciences Centre. It is unfortunate that individuals who have committed so many years of their lives to McMaster and brought a great deal of outside financial support should find themselves financially at risk and their appointments subject to termination when the external environment reduces its financial support to university researchers.

"Rewarding Accomplishment" also means providing the appropriate conditions so we can carry out our research and teaching functions in a professional manner. As there are fewer and fewer faculty and academic librarians, we must become more efficient in carrying out our academic responsibilities. To do this some provision must be made to increase University support for our research and teaching efforts.

It is disappointing that the administration has shown little interest in even modest increases in our Professional Development Allowances (PDA). The current amount has been frozen for a number of years. Clearly the amount is inadequate and many faculty find they must subsidize the University by paying increasing amounts of our stagnate after-tax incomes for conference attendance and the purchase off scholarly journals and books. The latter items are more and more pressing as funds for our libraries cannot keep up with the prices of new and existing scholarly journals.

We recognize that the ultimate source of our troubles lies with the current federal and provincial governments. The Federal Government continues the unfortunate legacy of previous Conservative administrations in cutting the support for both post-secondary transfers to the provincial government and the research granting councils. Members of our

Executive and members of the Association have written to Federal officials about these matters. We have received nice letters back, but the cuts continue. The last letter I received, from the Chair of the Liberal Caucus Committee on Higher Education, is brief and despondent. It notes that it has carried our message forward "As far as possible," and ends "we will continue to do what we can". The Federal cabinet is not listening to them or us.

Provincially, matters, as we all know, are just as bad. The Conservative Government seems uninterested in the plight of university education while cutting us substantially more than hospitals, primary and secondary schools, municipalities and correctional facilities. We have lobbied face-to-face with the Premier, the Minister and even invited the Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Education and Training to campus. Yet the cuts continue. We must all try to raise public concerns by telling the public and government officials of the terrible long-term consequences of these negative actions.

Of course MUFA has done many other things this year. You can get a flavour of these from the reports of Committees and Boards. The Executive Committee has worked very hard this year and I thank them. Our Past President, Lorraine Allan, has always helped me when I needed advice, which was often, and I have great confidence in the energy, commitment and knowledge of my successor, Les Robb who will be President one week from now.

While all of the Executive worked hard, two jobs are especially difficult: Remunerations and Special Enquiries & Grievances. Wayne Lewchuk and Louis Greenspan responded above and beyond what I could reasonably expect. Both were successful in my view. The year-to-year structure of this organization provided a model for others in this University. If the University were as well-organized as MUFA, we would certainly be the most efficient university in Canada. For all this, we must thank Phyllis and Kelly. Finally, I want to thank all of you, MUFA's loyal members, for your work and commitment to the Association, including attending meetings such as this one and keeping informed. These latter activities are important to all organizations. Thank you once again.

*Henry J. Jacek*

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## **News Update The Referendum concerning Support of MUFA**

As you probably already know, in this year's negotiations we proposed that all faculty should financially support the work of the McMaster University Faculty Association and membership in the Association should become a condition of employment for CP/M faculty at McMaster. The proposal included an opt out provision for those who objected to being a member of MUFA. The Administration agreed to this proposal on the condition that it receive majority support in a referendum of all eligible faculty. This referendum was held in April (see RESULTS box below).

The ballots, counted by our auditors, supported the proposal by 219 to 101 votes. The turnout, of 42%, is the highest on any of our ballots in recent memory, and perhaps the highest ever. The success of this vote means we should add many new members. The intention is, once our new membership is known, to review our budget and determine to what extent our mill rate (currently 6.2, or 0.62 of a percent of salary) might be reduced. We will be bringing a proposal to the fall general meeting.

At the time of the referendum there were a few unresolved issues that have now been settled at the Joint Committee. Perhaps the most interesting new decision is that we have agreed in the Joint Committee, that for the year 1996-97, the 'Alternate Recipient', as per the opt out provision discussed above, shall be the McMaster University Student Centre.

Some of you have been asking about why we allow an opt out provision at all, and it is perhaps worth a clarifying word here. First, one of the most serious objections of many of our members to the *status quo* was that there was a financial incentive to not being a member of MUFA. Individuals who simply wanted a "free ride" could save themselves dues by not joining MUFA and letting others pay the burden of supporting MUFA. Having membership required, while allowing an opt out provision for those who object to membership, comes close to eliminating the

financial incentives to not joining MUFA. A second reason, however, for allowing the 'opt out' is that experience of other organizations has shown that having members who really and truly object to belonging, is probably more trouble than it is worth.

Another matter that has recently been agreed to at the Joint Committee is the set of procedures surrounding opting out. Some organizations have made opting out an onerous task so as to discourage individuals from taking that option. We have not wanted to put up road blocks and have proposed simply that a letter to the Administration, copied to the Association, will be all that is required. Details of the persons to inform and the notice time required will be circulated shortly by the Joint Committee.

L. Robb

## **RESULTS:**

### **REFERENDUM REGARDING THE FUNDING OF MUFA**

We hereby confirm the ballots to the question:

*The University shall make it a condition of employment of faculty on the CP/M scheme that each member shall pay to the McMaster University Faculty Association (MUFA) an amount equal to the membership dues in MUFA, fixed annually in accordance with its constitution. In cases where an individual objects to being a member of MUFA, an equivalent amount shall be contributed to a recipient or recipients agreed upon from time to time by the Joint Committee.*

**Agree 219 Disagree 101 Spoiled Ballots 0 Total ballots 320**

Richard A. Hoecht, CA  
Hoecht & Associates

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## ***Letter to the Editor***

*The following letter was received in response to Frances Willey's letter which appeared in the April 1996 MUFA Newsletter (Volume 22.6).*

*After reading Fran Willey's letter, I thought it was important that I respond on behalf of the University in order to clarify some of the misconceptions that may have been created as a result of her letter.*

*The policy which provides that benefits are to be terminated at the end of the month in which the employee dies is one that has been in place for as long as anyone can remember. Concerns have not been raised about the policy in the past. As soon as Fran drew her situation to my attention, her benefits were immediately extended for a further month, and after we had a chance to examine the policy, we subsequently extended them to the 30th of June. That policy remains under review, and I trust will be addressed by the Joint Committee, in which the Faculty Association and the University discuss and negotiate remuneration, including benefits.*

*You may recall there was a comprehensive review of employee benefits in the mid-1980's, and there have been subsequent discussions since. As a result of these discussions, there are differences in the benefits for active and retired faculty and spouses. In the case of retirees there is a provision for a survivor's pension to continue to be paid and some other benefits continued. This recognizes the fact that the surviving spouse of a retiree in many cases is beyond the normal retirement age. In the case of death of an active faculty member the surviving spouse would receive payment from both the life insurance coverage and from the pension plan. The differences in benefits result from discussions and negotiations over time, and*

*the views of how the needs of individuals may vary at different stages of their lives. In one case the insurance paid is significantly more and in the other case medical and dental benefits are continued.*

*Fran also commented on the options related to Tom's pension. In a matter like this each person needs to decide which option best meets the needs of his or her personal circumstances. These circumstances can vary according to whether the person is working, whether there are dependents, personal financial objectives, etc. I submit that it is better to have a range of options than no choice. McMaster is not in a position to provide financial advice, and each person must make the choice that is most appropriate for his or her situation.*

*As soon as Fran contacted me, the University responded quickly and appropriately to the situation. As a result, we are moving to ensure that others who follow will also receive appropriate treatment. We continue to review our benefits programs on an ongoing basis to ensure that within our fiscal resources and consistent with the wishes of our employees, we are providing a timely and competitive package of benefits to faculty and staff. Again, these are issues that are of continuing importance to the Joint Committee, and will be the subject of future negotiations. I hope these comments are helpful in clarifying the situation.*

*Peter George  
President & Vice-Chancellor*

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## ***Bring your old books to the Library***

*(and have them evaluated for \$5 per title)*

*This will be a unique opportunity to discover if your signed copy of ULYSSES is really worth \$1 million, and at the same time help to support the Library's fund raising efforts.*

*In conjunction with the Alumni weekend, the Mills memorial Library will be hosting a fund raising event on Saturday, June 1, 1996 at 10:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. In addition to Alumni visitors, all faculty are cordially invited to have a treasured book(s) evaluated by either John Rush or Hugh Anson-Cartwright, two distinguished antiquarian book dealers.*

*In addition to an expert appraisal, book owners may also receive free advice from the library's conservation staff on how to preserve the condition and value of their book collections.*

*See you on June 1 in the lobby of Mills Library.*

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## ***How Competitive are the Salaries of Ontario Faculty?***

*It is generally acknowledged that the University of Toronto has the highest salaries in the province. But how high are these? In order to compare, the University of Toronto Faculty Association converted salaries at U.S. Doctoral Institutions to Canadian dollars and compared those to U of T salaries (see Table below). U of T's full professor salaries, for example, fall about in the middle of the distribution of over a hundred institutions. There are some 60 universities ahead of Toronto's salaries (and hence ourselves) including many state universities that most academics would not rank in the same group as Toronto. Overpaid relative to the North American market? Hardly!*

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## ***DOCTORAL INSTITUTIONS***

### ***Average Salaries -- Expressed in Canadian Dollars***

AAUP Rating Scale - 1995/96

<b>RANK</b>	<b>95th%</b>	<b>80th%</b>	<b>60th%</b>	<b>40th%</b>	<b>20th%</b>	<b>U of T</b>
Full Prof	\$130,144	\$112,672	\$103,180	\$95,200	\$87,892	\$101,683
Associate	87,962	80,164	74,564	69,324	65,324	81,621
Assistant	75,992	65,660	62,552	59,472	56,014	56,475

*(Sources: StatsCan and Academe, Annual Salary Survey)*

*At the University of Toronto the average salary for a Full Professor is below the 60th percentile relative to the APE Rating Scale; for Associate Professors, the average salary is just above the 80th percentile; and for Assistant Professors, it is just above the 20th percentile (AAUP: American Association of University Professors).*

*[A copy of the University of Toronto Newsletter can be viewed in the MUFA Office]*

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## ***Victory in Ottawa!***

*At the annual spring meeting of the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) in Ottawa on Saturday, May 4th, Rhoda Howard was elected to the Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee. This is the first time that a McMaster faculty member has been elected to a CAUT committee or office since N. D. Lane served as Secretary of CAUT in the 1950s.\* The AFT Committee mainly investigates individual cases relating to the violation of academic freedom. As well, the Committee is involved in formulating policy statements, model clauses, guidelines and information papers.*

*Rhoda Howard defeated two other candidates to capture the one open position on this Committee of six elected and three ex officio members. Dr. Howard, a Professor of Sociology, has conducted extensive research and consulted widely in the areas of human rights and academic freedom. She is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and is Director of the McMaster Theme School on International Justice and Human Rights. At the community level, Dr. Howard serves the City of Hamilton by her active membership on the Advisory Council to the Mayor's Committee against Racism and Discrimination.*  
*H. Jacek*

*\*[a note of interest: Retired professor A. Berland served as Executive Head and Secretary of CAUT from 1968-73 before coming to McMaster.]*

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## ***We Need Help!***

### ***Unpaid days off for faculty at McMaster***

*In our agreement of this spring, we agreed to 3 unpaid days off. Two of these were named (in late December) while the third was suggested for Friday, the 11th of October. Although MUFA, in negotiations with the Administration on behalf of the Board of Governors, determine salaries and conditions of employment and, in principle, could have simply agreed that faculty would not work that day, we agreed to involve Senate because of their academic responsibilities. The Joint Committee agreed that Senate should be asked to agree to this proposal.*

*The logic of the proposal was, and is, that there is a funding crisis at the University and it is essential that this fact be made clear to the public. The proposed day of closure was a way to bring home this point. Other professionals in the province have advertised their plight (think of the crisis in the schools that now seems to have vanished) and have been much more successful in getting their message across to the public.*

*Having reached unanimous agreement in the Joint Committee to ask Senate to agree to this proposal, we were surprised to hear that the Provost and some other members of the Administration spoke against this proposal at Senate. We feel we were misled at the bargaining table. The Administration team gave no indication that they were arguing for sending the proposal to Senate so they could defeat it in another forum. Had they indicated that was their intention we would not have signed this agreement.*

*We did not expect our counterparts on the Administration team to support this proposal to the same extent we did, but we did not expect signatories to the agreement to speak against it. In the end Senate defeated the proposal and we are now back to seeking a day to close the University.*

*Some of the arguments at Senate were against the particular day, Oct. 11. The Dean of Business argued it would particularly disadvantage MBA students who take courses in 6-week blocks on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Other arguments were made regarding lab re-scheduling and others about difficulties in the School of Nursing. An alternative day, perhaps in second term might satisfy these arguments. However, there were other arguments made against any day of closure during term. There were arguments that it would be politically ineffective, that it would harm students, and so forth. There was also a straw vote taken against accepting any teaching day as a paid day off which passed by a wide margin. Senate was not convinced of this strategy.*

*We now need some feedback from our members on this issue and are seeking it in this informal ballot. At our earlier open meetings, there was discussion of the unpaid days off and there was vociferous support for the view that it was unacceptable to simply name all the days outside of term. The expectations of performance on individual faculty members would remain the same as in the absence of days off, and nothing would be accomplished by agreeing to such days off. Some members in the audience argued eloquently that all days without pay must be teaching days to make such an agreement worthwhile.*

*We settled for what we think is a reasonable compromise, but Senate has not seen it that way. Given these developments, we wish to know how our members would like us to proceed in seeking a resolution to this last day off.*

***Indicate your ranking by placing your preference (1 for best, 4 for worst) to the left of each of A,B,C, and D. Circle one response to each question indicating the degree of support for the proposition. Tear off this page of the Newsletter and return to the Faculty Association Office, Hamilton Hall Room 103A.***

\_\_\_\_\_A. Seek an alternate day during the teaching term (more likely in the second term to allow planning time and perhaps avoiding days that might be problematic for one reason or another) and ask Senate to reconsider.

***strongly support acceptable unacceptable***

\_\_\_\_\_B. Agree that closing the University during teaching days is too disruptive to students (as argued by some senators) and pick an unpaid day out of the teaching term.

***strongly support acceptable unacceptable***

\_\_\_\_\_C. Agree to closing the University on a day outside of the teaching term on condition that the Administration will work with faculty, staff and students to mount a "political action day", on a day during the teaching term, in which we attempt to provide information to our students and the public about the plight of the universities.

***strongly support acceptable unacceptable***

\_\_\_\_\_D. Because we cannot find a satisfactory alternative day for the third unpaid day, press the administration to agree that we will only have two unpaid days for the coming academic year, and if we fail to get their agreement, scrap the whole agreement and begin negotiations anew.

***strongly support acceptable unacceptable***

*In making your preferences known, please consider the options carefully and think about the implications.*

*L. Robb*

*Fill in your name and email address here*