

# The *Update*

## Special Edition for Term Faculty October 2014



### What Can OCFA Do For You?

By Tim Walters, your OCFA President

Hi folks,

edition of *The Update* addressing issues specifically related to term faculty in recognition of Fair Employment Week, October 27<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> (<http://www.fairemploymentweek.ca/>).

Last month, I participated in a nationwide phone survey organized by the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), the organization that also organizes Fair Employment Week, and who are publishing a report on the state of the nation from a term faculty perspective. During the interview, most of the questions pertained to the particulars about the conditions of work for term faculty here at OC salary differentials, access to benefits and support, job security, and so forth as well as to what roles term members play in the OCFA.

At the end of the conversation, the interviewer asked me what I felt needed changing among our own union membership as regards term faculty for their position to improve, which is a much trickier question to answer. I know what the college can and should do to improve the working lives of term members the adoption of CAUT -rata pay and benefits policy ensuring equal pay for equal work is a good place to start. But what we can do ourselves is a thornier matter. The two changes that I finally arrived at, and which I take to be prerequisite for improving condition for term faculty at OC, are:

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## Summative Evaluation Process cont...

Next, what can you expect the summative evaluation process to be as well as what will be expected of you? You will want to request a copy of

Process: College Professor Information Package from your supervisor. The document outlines the procedures followed, a set of duties and responsibilities for college professors against which performance is measured, and a list of criteria used to evaluate teaching performance. I do not wish to repeat what is already contained in the package, but I do want to draw your attention to a few items.

Please be aware of the timelines for various steps of the process. You must be provided written notice at least five days prior to the beginning of the summative process. The actual evaluation will commence at your first meeting with your designated supervisor. Once begun, the evaluation process will take place during the remainder of the semester. A final meeting (or meetings) with your supervisor will be scheduled after all the data has been collected and a draft version of the report is ready for your review. Within 20 days of the last meeting, your supervisor will issue the final summative evaluation report. You will be given the opportunity to provide written comments to be added to the report. You are then required to sign the report. Please be aware that your signature does NOT constitute agreement with the outcome or content of the report. It is merely confirmation that you have received and read the evaluation.

Also pay close attention to the sort of information that will be gathered by your supervisor as part of the evaluation. Some of this information you will need to provide. I want to make just two comments. First, some of the information will not be



## What Can OCFA Do For You? cont...

1. Getting all OCFA members, and particularly our continuing members, to better understand what it means to be a term faculty member today.

When I was starting my doctoral program 15 years ago, the idea was that term work was what you did for a few years before getting a permanent job. It was part time and temporary, and done almost entirely by people who were building their CV by publishing, conference-going, serving on committees and so on, until they completed their degrees and began their careers proper in full time continuing positions. While this remains for many the popular perception of what term work is, it no longer has very much to do

Sweeping changes to the funding and structure of our sector at every level over the past few decades have fundamentally transformed the nature of faculty term work, leading to the

willing and less able to create full-time permanent positions, and have been led both by a shift in internal institutional spending priorities and an external pressure caused by waning government support for colleges and universities to try and reduce labour costs in addition to placing more and more of the financial burden on our students. In practice, this has meant a massive, steady, and ongoing shift to the use of a cheaper and more disposable temporary labour force which duplicates neoliberal changes across most other employment sectors in our economy. At OC, and in the post-secondary system as a whole across Canada, this has led to the incremental growth and increasing exploitation of the precariat.

What this means today is that around 1 in 3 OCFA members has a part time contract,

*Example: In the 2012/2013 academic year, Levon teaches 3 sections of Psychology in Vernon and 4 in Kelowna. In 2013/2014, Levon has only 7 TLUs so he is not eligible for ROA. He is hired to teach the same thing again. He now has a total of 14*

What this means is that a growing percentage of our membership receive no pay between the Fall and Winter semesters, and no pay over the summer. They receive diminished access to medical benefits and more restricted access to funding. They have no job security from one year to the next. And the icing on the cake? They receive less pay for doing exactly the same work. An OCFA member at Step 7 on a continuing appointment is paid \$16,452.25 for teaching 2 courses, while those on term appointment receive \$9,573.94. A three course workload pays \$23,662.88 to your continuing colleague, and \$14,360.92 to your term one. What is okay about this?

Again, the historical rationale for this inequity is that term faculty need only endure this sorry state of affairs for a few years before joining the more comfortable ranks of continuing faculty. Again, those days are gone, or almost gone. The new reality is this: unless our system radically changes and we should fight to see that it does many of our term members today will be term members forever, or (if they are lucky) for decades. This is the era of the permanent, life-long term member, yet our collective agreement and way of doing things only make sense, is only remotely fair, if term status is for those who are just starting their careers and trying to get their feet in the door.

*Continued on pg 5.*

For many, this is their careers. As such, it is important that we continuing faculty disavow ourselves completely of our previous sense of who a term faculty member is. They are not that. They may have been teaching longer than you. They may well have better academic or professional credentials than you, have done more scholarship, be more up to service than you, be more involved in their department, their campus, etc. In the vast majority of cases, the only reason member X is a continuing member and member Y is a term member is when they happened to apply for a job here. If this is the new normal, we need to change the way we do things to reflect it, and we need to fight against it at the same time. This is work for all of us: term faculty cannot do this by themselves.

2. Making term faculty issues more of a priority for our union.

At every OCFA Council, provincial and local Bargaining and General meeting I attend, we talk about how important term faculty issues are, and everyone agrees. I know my colleagues on the OCFA Executive and on Council and on our Bargaining committee all understand the plight of term faculty and take their responsibility to address those concerns very seriously.

However, this consensus has not always corresponded to the kinds of improvements that are so self-evidently required to do away with the current treatment of term workers. In my time at OC, it has become contra seemingly widespread opinion to the contrary harder, not easier, to be converted from a term to a continuing position at OC. While we have all received raises during this time to not quite keep up with the standard

representing you, and who I know to be keen to do this work. I ask of all term faculty that you try to find the time to hold our feet to the fire. Come to our general meetings and speak up for the idea that term faculty issues be not just a



# Were You Aware You Can Apply for Funding?

By Adrian Fontenla, your OCFA Treasurer

As term employees you may not be aware that the Collective Bargaining Agreement negotiated by your union has provided you additional benefits. The only catch is you must apply for them. Unfortunately, the eligibility and application requirements are different depending on what you intend to apply for. The purpose of this article is to give term employees a resource to find basic information about the following three benefits:

## Grants-in-Aid

### **Eligibility:**

Any employee (includes term employees) undertaking research, scholarly activity or creative activity is eligible to apply.

### **Deadlines:**

There are four times during the year that you can apply for funding (which change annually):

September 26, 2014    expired  
November 28, 2014  
February 13, 2015  
April 10, 2015

### **Limits:**

The annual grant to an individual will not exceed \$4,000. In addition, you must apply for funding BEFORE you incur the expenditure.

### **How to Apply:**

If you think you would be eligible for this benefit, you can find more information by clicking [here](#).

If you want to apply for this benefit, send a completed application form to the  
-President of

Jennings [Ljennings@okanagan.bc.ca](mailto:Ljennings@okanagan.bc.ca).  
You can find the application form by clicking [here](#). Or through My Okanagan  
OC Express Forms    OCFA Grants in Aid

### **How to be reimbursed:**



# Members of OCFA Council and CARC 2014-2015

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