

URFA Update



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URFA statement of purpose

The purpose of the Association is:

- *To enhance the freedom and quality of teaching, learning, scholarship, debate, thought and research within the University community,*
- *To improve the working conditions of its members;*
- *To uphold the principles of equality of opportunity and human rights;*
- *To promote the sustainable economic development of the University;*
- *To promote the ecological sustainability of the University;*
- *To promote solidarity with the labour movement;*
- *To advocate university affairs to all levels of government and the broader community*

-URFA Constitution, Article 2.1



A message from your PRESIDENT



URFA members entrusted me with the Presidency in May 2018 and I have tried since to move things forward on various fronts. While one of my roles is to be the link between our Association and the rest of the labour movement, I also want to make sure URFA listens to and engages with its members.

Starting in September 2018, I have been visiting URFA members in their workplace. I started with FNUniv, where Academic bargaining unit members were moving into brand new offices. This was definitely a positive improvement. I then visited Campion and Luther, where members were eager to know more about the current negotiations with the U of R Academic bargaining unit. I then did a tour of the Faculty of Kinesiology, with its unique structure that includes sports teams, the Paul Schwann Center, and the Fitness and Lifestyle Center. I realized how diverse URFA's membership is and how different workplaces have different needs. Next in line was the Education Building where I met members from Business Administration, Education, Social Work, and Engineering and Applied Science.

I also had a peek inside Information Services, where many of our APT colleagues are working. I also toured Riddell Center, home of the Faculty of MAP and Student Services. During the 2019 reading week, I took the opportunity to visit our APT colleagues in the Registrar's Office and Financial Services. I have been making my way around campus, but I still have many buildings to visit and many members to meet.

What came out of these meetings? First of all, a sense that URFA is truly a collective. We often work individually in our offices and it is good for all of us to be reminded that together we are stronger. We also have various needs and URFA should seek to better meet them.

I still find it challenging to meet with our sessional colleagues, who often work odd hours and have no office. But I will not give up and will work to find creative ways to meet them.

URFA had two delegates at the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour (SFL) Convention in October 2018. These meetings truly make me feel a sense of belonging to part of something bigger within the labour movement, and I would encourage more URFA members to attend next year. In February 2019, the SFL organized a Media Training workshop that included media theory, media literacy, and media interview skill-building. Three people from URFA attended and the workshop was not only informative but also very fun.

In order to maintain our strong network of relations with our Canadian colleagues, I have attended the CAUT Western Regional Conference in October 2018, CAUT Council in November 2018 as well as the CAUT Forum for Presidents in January of the current year. It was a great opportunity to reacquaint myself with old friends, meet new ones and get up to date on what is happening in Universities across Canada. There are some recurring trends, as administrations are trying to push back progress made by our members. CAUT is an awesome organization, with resources and knowledge that are all ours to use. I encourage members to get more information about CAUT and to attend some of the formations they offer, when they come to our campus.

I have enjoyed serving as URFA President over the past year. It has been a pleasure to meet so many members, and I look forward to meeting more of you as I begin the second year of my term as president. As always, please feel free to reach out to me if you have questions, concerns, or just want to chat.

Sylvain Rheault
URFA President

A message from your EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



First, I want to thank the dedicated staff of your Association: Kathy Sthamann and Dana Tarnes in the front office; Communications Officer Eric Bell, who joined the Association in 2018, Financial Officer, Debbie Head, who also joined URFA in 2018, and Member Services Officers (MSO), Frank Menttes, Colin Tether and Heather Ritenburg. Volunteer members are the head, heart and hands of your Association, and the staff are the supporting cast to that. They have been doing a spectacular job.

Thirty-year employee of URFA, Professional Officer Debbie Sagel, officially retired in January of 2019. All the best to Debbie and our deepest gratitude and a heartfelt thank you for her exceptional service and commitment to the Association and its members over the past three decades. While Debbie Sagel's departure left a 'historical knowledge' hole in the Association, the new members of your office team are literally moving mountains for you.

The following is the list of actions and initiatives, in the office over the past year.

Labour Relations

Your Association is working with the four employers in a pro-active, resolution-focused labour relations relationship. This has provided an enhanced service to our members by proactively addressing issues and reducing the number of arbitrations.

At the beginning of this reporting year your Association had six approved arbitrations. At the writing of this report, there are only two approved arbitrations. The other four arbitrations were settled without having to proceed to arbitration and thereby saving your Association arbitration costs.

Bargaining

Of the seven collective agreements under your Association's umbrella, the office supported the

successful bargaining of the U of R APT and FNUUniv APT collective agreements. The U of R Academic agreement is, at the time of this report, tentatively agreed to and awaiting ratification by the membership. A Bargaining Team has been approved for the FNUUniv Academic unit, with Campion College and Luther College units waiting patiently to be bargaining after the U of R Academic bargaining is concluded. A huge thank you to past, current and upcoming bargaining teams. Their volunteer efforts directly benefit you and your Association.

Training

The office continued to provide information sessions on the performance review process. In February 2019, CAUT provided an on-site membership engagement workshop. Information provided at that workshop is to be the basis for an URFA membership engagement strategy and plan.

Communication

The Executive approved your Association's first ever Communication Strategy and plan. In development of that survey, numerous in-person interviews were conducted and a communication survey was sent out. More details on URFA's communications plan and initiatives can be found later on in this report.

Office systems

When the U of R moved to bi-weekly pay, your Association's database was unable to make that move. What resulted were voluminous error reports that are time consuming to work with. We are working with an IT specialist to rebuild that portion of the database so it may work with the biweekly pay period.

The office is beginning to roll out a CAUT file management platform, in support of the Grievance Officer, the Grievance Committee and members.

General Meetings

A survey on URFA general meetings was recently done and that data is informing future general meetings. Several recommendations, including a new structure for the meetings, were made to the Executive Committee that will hopefully encourage an increased member attendance at our Winter and Fall General Meetings.

Next year

Looking to the upcoming year, there are plans for a revamped URFA website that includes a members only section as well as continued streamlining of office processes, all which focus on enhancing your Association's support of its members.

The upcoming year will be a time of continued evolution as your Association gets better and stronger by entering its first ever strategic planning process. We cannot do it all, and a strategic planning process, which builds upon the foundation of the Constitution, would

define the areas your Association wants to focus and dedicate resources to. It will be a living document that will evolve with your Association over the years.

Finally, I wish to thank the volunteer members of the Association. It is through this volunteer effort on URFA's Council of Representatives, Executive Committee and its seven standing committees, the bargaining committees, ad hoc committees and numerous joint committees that your voice, thoughts and inputs shape this campus. Volunteer committee work is the heart of your Association and is invaluable to the functioning of your Association.

In 2018, I had the opportunity to Attend the Western Regional Conference at Athabasca University, along with the URFA President. Held each year throughout Western Canada, this conference is a chance for Faculty Associations to gather and discuss the issues facing Faculty Associa-

tions in the West. This year, URFA is proud to host the 2019 Western Regionals Conference October 17-19th. Stay tuned for more information about the conference in the coming months.

Remember, if you have a question regarding your collective agreement, an accommodation, a return-to-work, your benefits, your workload, or anything else related to an issue in the workplace, please contact the URFA office to speak with one of the Member Services Officers. Those amazing people are there to help you.

Kevin Siebert
URFA Executive Director

URFA Notary Services

URFA provides notary services to its members at no cost. URFA is able to administer oaths, receive declarations, issues deeds and contracts, make notarized documents for official purposes, sign passport documents and more. Contact the URFA office for more information.

Member Emergency Fund

URFA has a Member Emergency Fund to support members facing emergency circumstances. Expenditures from the fund are considered a loan and are normally arranged to be repaid within a calendar year. Applications can be made through the URFA Executive Director and are kept strictly confidential.



“ URFA is always there to help when I have questions about my Collective Agreement. ”

- Paul, Campion College Academic

Collective Bargaining

2018 was a busy year for URFA bargaining committees, with two new collective agreements ratified, and a strike mandate given to the U of R Academic Bargaining Committee by its membership.

Below is a quick summary of the collective agreements bargained in 2018, and the agreements that will be bargained in 2019.

U of R APT

In 2018, U of R APT members voted in favour of a four-year collective agreement with the University, covering the years 2017-2021.

Thanks to a strong mandate given to the Bargaining Committee from the membership, the bargaining committee was able to make gains in compensation for members during a time when the provincial government was attempting to mandate across-the-board wage rollbacks for all publicly funded employees.

The committee was also able to successfully pressure the employer to drop some of their original proposals that included reduced vacation time for new employees and the elimination of the retirement bonus.

While gains made were not as large as had been originally proposed by the committee, they are still important, and URFA will continue fighting to ensure that all members are fairly compensated for the work that they do. Although the current collective

agreement for U of R APT members does not expire for a few more years, URFA is actively engaging APT members and has formed a working group to make sure members are informed about their collective agreements, and that bargaining priorities are identified in advance of the expiration of the current agreement.

FNUniv APT

Following several bargaining sessions in the spring of 2018, FNUniv APT members voted in favour of a four-year collective agreement with FNUniv, covering the years 2017-2021.

Bargaining began with URFA filing an unfair labour practice against FNUniv after making unsuccessful attempts to bring University management to the bargaining table starting in late 2016.

Following the filing of the Unfair Labour Practice, URFA was able to bring FNUniv management to bargain. Bargaining was conducted using an interest-based model with the University to come to agreement on a number of non-contentious issues. This was done with the help of a facilitator from the Ministry of Labour relations and Workplace Safety. When the parties got to discussing monetary items, the teams moved back towards a more positional bargaining format.

In June of 2018, the FNUniv APT Bargaining Committee was able to reach an agreement with the employer that included gains in compensation for FNUniv APT members. The contract was ratified by members in July, 2018.



U of R Academic

Bargaining for U of R Academic members began in the spring of 2018.

After bargaining throughout the spring and summer, the Bargaining Committee was able to reach agreement on a number of non-contentious issues, but a number of key issues remained unresolved. A number of proposals from the University signalled a concerning shift in the University's priorities away from research. The University's proposals also ignored key issues such as job security for sessional members, predictable teaching hours, maintaining the collegiality of performance review, compensation that kept pace with the rate of inflation, and pensions comparable to those received by University management.

Following several more bargaining sessions in the fall, the U of R Academic Bargaining Committee asked the membership for a strike mandate in an attempt to return to the bargaining table with the support of the membership and move the University towards negotiating a fair and reasonable collective agreement.

In October, 2018, U of R Academic Members voted 87.4% in favour of a strike mandate, and the Bargaining Committee returned to the bargaining table with the support of the membership behind them.

Bargaining continued into 2019, but the Bargaining Committee remained unable to reach agreement with the University on a number of issues. The committee

declared an impasse in February and requested the assistance of a mediator to assist in reaching a collective agreement with University administration.

After 40 hours in conciliation, the Bargaining Committee was unable to reach an agreement with the University administration following several scheduled days of mediation with the University.

For the first time in many years, a Job Action Committee was formed, with a robust group of U of R Academic members from across faculties. URFA served the University strike notice and began preparation for job action at the end of March. News of strike notice generated a great level of interest and engagement from the membership, the University Community and the public. In March, Students packed a town hall meeting to hear URFA chief negotiator Jason Childs explain URFA's position, and students were also successful in getting the University to hold its own town hall with the President and Provost.

On March 25, just days before URFA's strike notice was to take effect, the Bargaining Committee was able to reach a tentative agreement with the University. The agreement has been presented to the membership and a ratification vote will be held in April.

2019

There are currently several expired collective agreements to be negotiated in 2019. A Bargaining Committee has been struck for FNUUniv Academic staff, and it is anticipated that bargaining for Champion and Luther Colleges will begin once the agreement for U of R Academic Staff is ratified. The FNUUniv Sessional contract expires at the end of 2019, and a committee has already been formed in order to begin bargaining in early 2020.

As always, URFA will continue to bargain to make gains for our members, and fight against any proposals from the employers that take away hard-fought provisions in our seven collective agreements.



Treasurer's Report

For the past few years, URFA has posted an operating deficit. It has always been the goal of the Association to balance the operating budget, and URFA has taken steps towards both balancing the budget and ensuring financial stability and sustainability.

The Executive Committee looked at options for reducing the deficit in the 2018/19 budget without impacting the level of service URFA provides to its members, and one time cost reductions of \$38,814.50 were made in the 2018/2019 budget. This included cuts to travel, meetings and food services and committee expenses. However despite these reductions a deficit remained and it became apparent that without changes deficits would continue to occur in future years.

After consultations, the Finance Committee recommended a staged roll out of member fee adjustments over four years as the best way to balance URFA's budget while maintaining its current operations and allowing for increased URFA activity going into the future. The recommendation was discussed at the 2018 Spring General Meeting, and was approved by members in a vote following the meeting.

The first increase of 0.5% went into effect on May 1, 2018. A second increase of 0.5% will go into effect on May 1, 2019. A third increase of 0.5% will occur on May 1, 2020. The Finance Committee will meet in 2020 to determine if an additional increase of 0.5% is required in 2021.

This is the first time since 2006 that URFA member fees have increased. Instead of asking members to pay the full cost up front, implementing several gradual increases over the next few years ensures that URFA is able to be financially sustainable while mitigating the financial impact a single, large increase would have on members. Even with the increase, URFA member fees will remain comparable to those at other Faculty Associations in Canada.

As the fee adjustment rolls out over the next few years, the Trust Committee has approved the use of the Trust Fund to cover shortfalls in the operating fund. During this time, the Trust Committee will meet to evaluate the use of the funds to cover these shortfalls.

Over the years, URFA has found itself trying to maintain services to our members in an increasingly complex environment. As a result, the Association has had to hire more professional staff in order to maintain and improve the level of service provided to our members. With this approved fee adjustment, URFA is on the path towards balancing its budget, and ensures the Association's ability to maintain its current staff complement while being financially sustainable going into the future.

The audited financial statements for the 2017/18 fiscal year were approved at the Fall 2018 General Meeting, and are available at the URFA Office.

URFA Professional Officer Debbie Sagel, who was instrumental in creating URFA's budget for many years, retired at the end of 2018. Financial Officer Debbie Head was hired in the fall of 2018, and is working with myself and the Finance Committee on a preliminary budget for 2019/2020.

Andrei Volodin
URFA Treasurer
Chair, URFA Trust Committee

Approved by URFA members in 2018, the adjustment to member fees will ensure that URFA's finances remain stable while still providing the same level of service to our members.



“ URFA works to make sure that sessional members are treated fairly and equitably. ”

- Juliet, FNUniv Sessional

Member Services

Each year, your team of Member Services Officers (MSOs) spend hundreds of hours assisting and advocating on behalf of members across all seven bargaining units, both on the main campuses and those who work remotely.

In 2018, URFA Member Services Officers:

- Worked with bargaining committees to negotiate two collective agreements
- Provided representation and advice during meetings between members and the employer
- Filed Grievances on behalf of members
- Worked with members to resolve member conflicts
- Assisted members in obtaining workplace accommodations
- Held information sessions on the appeals process
- Provided guidance and advice for performance reviews
- Provided guidance, advice and support during workplace investigations
- Provided guidance and advice on appointments and terminations
- Assisted with return to work following leaves
- Answered member's questions about information in their collective agreement
- Answered member's questions about retirement and pensions.

Whether you need advice, want clarification, or have a workplace issue you need to discuss in private, URFA offers a welcoming and safe environment. URFA MSOs are experts on your collective agreement, and are trained and skilled in various conflict resolution strategies. They are able to offer you advice and guidance that are in your best interest.

In 2018, all three URFA MSOs received Mental Health First Aid training from the Mental Health Commission of Canada. URFA MSOs are trained to provide immediate support and guidance in a safe environment, can comfortably have conversations about mental health issues, and are able to provide members with assistance in finding professional and other mental health supports.

No question or issue you have is too small, and all conversations and correspondence with URFA are kept strictly confidential. URFA will never share information with the employer or contact the employer without obtaining your consent.

Looking forward to 2019, URFA is considering options for case management software that would help us with record keeping, as well as tracking statistics and identifying trends. Hopefully, it will also allow us to share basic statistics with members on the types of cases and issues that MSOs deal with on an annual basis.

Your team of URFA Member Services Officers looks forward to continuing to represent and advocate on your behalf in the year ahead, and remind members that they can be contacted at any time through the URFA office.



“ I know that I can always contact URFA for guidance and assistance if there are issues in the workplace. ”

- Jen, U of R APT

URFA Council of Representatives

URFA Council of Representatives (COR) members continue to advise the URFA Executive on a variety of issues, including recommendations from the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee, URFA Affiliations, and other issues brought to COR from either the Executive or the General Membership.

Recently COR has been considering the translation of URFAs constitution and collective agreements into French and Indigenous languages. Consultations for this initiative with stakeholders are currently underway.

New from the Council of Representatives over the past year has been the Launch of COR Notes, a short, quarterly e-newsletter sent out on behalf of Representatives in order to inform the membership of the activities of COR.

Council members have also had the opportunity to undergo some skills training and professional development. At the November meeting, Representatives were given a presentation by the SFL on how to use rules of order to bring attention to key issues at faculty council and staff meetings. The training was well received, and COR is looking into

holding more small skills training and professional development courses at our meetings in the coming year.

In February 2019, some COR members attended a Membership Engagement workshop from CAUT. COR will continue discussions on how we can continue to engage our members and encourage participation with URFA.

There are still vacancies on the Council, listed on the Council of Representatives page on the URFA website. If your constituency is without a representative, consider putting your name forward to ensure that your voice is being heard by URFA. COR meets quarterly for meetings that last approximately two hours.

URFA members can bring issues and suggestions to COR for discussion at any time by contacting their Representative. A full listing of current COR Representatives can be found on the URFA website. COR meetings are also open to all URFA members. Those who wish to attend the meetings may do so at any time as a non-voting member.





“ We are the collective voice of over 1,500 employees. Together, we can bring positive change to our workplaces. ”

- Darlene, U of R Academic

Equity Committee

The Equity Committee has actively worked on several initiatives this year: Equity Week, Sexual Violence Policy, Breastfeeding/parenting spaces on campus, gendered violence as a workplace issue, accessibility, and other issues related to equity.

Our greatest effort has been put toward Equity Week, which was held March 18-22, 2019. The week featured many discussions about Equity on our campus and in our community, and there were a number of events featuring guest speakers and workshops organized by the committee. Committee members also tabled on campus each day during the week. Thank you to everyone who stopped by to show their support.

During Equity week, the committee was also pleased to see a commitment from the University to construct a place on the main campus that is conducive to the needs of parents as they feed, express breastmilk, or prepare formula, as well as a commitment to increase the number of change tables available on both the main and College Avenue campuses. We look forward to these improvements to make the university a more

family-friendly environment.

We also want to draw your attention to a few practical things that URFA and the equity committee can help you with. You now have the right in Saskatchewan to take unpaid leave when needed to address intimate partner violence. This may result in reduced remuneration from the University, and as such if you find yourself in this situation you may contact URFA about using the emergency fund for a short-term loan.

Additionally, we would like members to know that URFA can provide help in navigating the process of seeking accommodations. To learn more about the process, go to the “resources” section of the URFA website.

After serving as Equity Officer for two years, Bridget Klest will be stepping down and the role will be assumed by Claire Carter. Bridget has enjoyed working with you on equity-related issues, and Claire looks forward to doing so in the year ahead.



The URFA Equity Committee meets regularly throughout the year. If you are interested in joining the committee, or have an equity issue you'd like to bring attention to, contact URFA at urfa@uregina.ca.

Sessional Advocacy Committee

The URFA Sessional Advocacy Committee had a busy 2018, with a campaign and several activities throughout the year.

The beginning of the year started with a campaign to raise awareness of the issues faced by sessional members on campus, and the University's increasing reliance on sessional instructors to teach undergraduate courses. Inspired by CAUT's campaign to "Make it Fair," the campaign generated a lot of discussion on campus and was covered by multiple media outlets.

Over the summer, Sessional Advocacy Chair Marianne Jacobsen attended the Coalition of Contingent Academic Labour (COCAL) conference in San Jose, California. The conference featured many discussions around mobilization and organization and how to build momentum in support of Sessional and contract workers on campus. The committee has since discussed some of the ideas that were shared at the conference, and how we can bring some of those ideas to URFA.

The Committee organized two social events in the fall semester. The first was to mark "Fair Employ-

ment Week," a week organized by CAUT to bring attention to the precarious work of sessionals and contract academic staff. The second social was an opportunity for sessional members to network with their colleagues. Many sessional members are only on campus when they teach, and don't always have the same opportunities to network with their colleagues as full time faculty. Both events were well attended, and the committee looks forward to planning future events and opportunities for sessional members to engage with their colleagues across campuses.

This year, the committee remains active and is meeting monthly to discuss future plans and activities. The SAC Committee also welcomes any sessional member who is interested to join the committee as there are several vacancies. All sessional members receive a stipend for their participation in committee meetings.



The Sessional Advocacy Committee meets regularly throughout the year. If you are interested in joining the committee, or have any thoughts or suggestions, the committee would love to hear from you! Contact URFA at urfa@uregina.ca for more information.

Grievance Committee

I am pleased to share my report for the 2019 URFA Annual Report. I wish to recognize members of the Grievance Committee, volunteers and staff, for their work upholding the rights of our members. Thank you to all.

My focus for this report is on restorative justice practices in a union-management, post-secondary environment. This report is an update.

I've been asking whether resolving member grievances must rest with the traditional adversarial process. Are there options to conventional conflict resolution processes wherein a winner and a loser must emerge; essentially, a finding of guilt or blame?

Conflict is inevitable. It's not unusual. We have developed standardized processes such as grievance procedures to manage different problems; the same set of tools each time to solve very different questions (Sabott, 2018). While grievance procedures speak to breaches of collective agreements, not all grievances are fundamentally contractual. Sometimes issues have more to do with meeting individual needs. Sabbot (2018) comments that "Even with the best of intentions, these habits [conventional conflict resolution methods] can result in frustration, shallow or even bad resolutions, and won't meet the needs of the people in conflict."

Some preliminary discussions with URFA committee members and Human Resources suggest there is an appetite to explore restorative justice options. To be clear, the choice of restorative justice is not instead of the existing grievance procedure but as an additional tool.

We use the same methods to resolve simple and complex problems or conflicts. When the only tool is a hammer, all issues are nails. For example, arbitration "... has its place, but often doesn't meet some of the underlying needs of parties to have a stronger voice in the resolution of the conflict" (Sabbot, 2018).

A Justice Studies student is helping to explore whether other post-secondary institutions use restorative justice alternatives and if so, how? They are also looking into whether restorative justice is a good fit within the U of R's culture.

Restorative justice is not a panacea. It is a different tool for resolving the harm caused by the conflict between and among individuals and teams. Sabbot (2018) again, "additional processes may need to be undertaken in order to build skills, address systemic conflict, and deal with underlying issues between individuals in the organization."

The term restorative justice conjures for many, victim-offender conflicts in a criminal justice context. It can be contextualized more broadly. Restorative justice speaks to interpersonal conflicts or harm and is used in many forums other than in a criminal justice context.

Another dimension of restorative justice is viewing solutions through the lens of reconciliation. That is, participating parties are making informed and consensual decisions. The voices of all are heard, and none above anyone of those involved. The resolution rests, in its entirety, with those individuals experiencing the conflict, not professionals, and within provincial and federal laws.

To conclude, Sabbot remarks: "This doesn't mean that our processes have to be easy for people or not include consequences when legitimate wrongdoing has occurred. It just means that educating them and checking in with them before, during, and after processes is part of implementing good conflict interventions. This is how we can do processes "with" people" (2018).

Hirsh Greenberg
Chair, URFA Grievance Committee

Pension & Benefits Committee

The Pension and Benefits Committee last met in 2018, and has not met in 2019 yet due to busy and conflicting schedules. The Committee hopes to call a meeting some time in April or May.

Committee members have been active in their roles on the AABC (Academic and Administrative Benefits Committee) and NABC (Non-Academic Benefits Committee). Both are currently having a Governance review undertaken by Towers Watson to ensure that the governance of the plans is meeting best practice guidelines. We are expecting a report at some point in Winter 2019 and the Pensions and Benefits Committee will provide an update after the report is received.

The AABC has agreed to provide analysis of the expected outcomes from the Defined Contribution plan. This is something that the URFA Pension and Benefits Committee has been asking for some time. This is a big step forward, and persistence on former Chair Larry Miller's part over the years and past URFA President Denis Fitzpatrick's eloquence have finally paid off. AABC will need to define the terms of this analysis, so this will take

some time but this is a very positive step in my view.

We discussed the issue of pension contribution rates at the last AABC, but management indicated that they were only prepared to discuss this issue as part of collective bargaining. I understand that this issue is currently being discussed as part of ongoing bargaining for U of R Academic Staff.

AABC have asked AON for an estimate of the plan's financial position as of December 31, 2018. Based on this estimate, we may undertake an Actuarial Valuation as of December 31, 2018. The next valuation is required to have an effective date no later than the end of 2019, and if the plan is in reasonable financial shape it makes sense to capture that position before the end of the three year period.

The Pension Plan AGM is scheduled for May 9, 2019. All members should try to attend this presentation on the health of our pension plan.

Peter Douglas
Chair, URFA Pension and Benefits Committee



Communications

In 2018, following an environmental scan, interviews with members and a survey of the membership, URFA's first-ever Communications strategy and plan was approved by the URFA Executive.

The goals of that communications plan, which includes goals and a timeline for the next three years, fall into five categories:

1. Member engagement and mobilization
2. Member education
3. Visual identity and visibility
4. Increase committee support and communicate with and through COR
5. Improved communication (tools and processes)

So far to date, several of the initiatives outlined in the communications plan have been put into action, including:

- Refreshed URFA quarterly newsletter
- Launch of URFA Facebook and Twitter accounts
- A monthly e-newsletter was implemented to reduce the number of URFA e-mails sent to members

- COR Notes, a quarterly email to increase communication between COR and the membership, was implemented
- Improvements to URFA's visibility on the main campus
- Access increased for at distance member by using Zoom for membership meetings.
- Updated URFA information packages and brochures

URFA has also increased its presence in the media, with multiple stories over the past year bringing attention to issues faced by the membership. This is part of our strategy to increase our recognition and visibility outside of the campus community and making the public more aware of issues being faced by members.

In 2018 URFA also joined the Canadian Association of Labour Media (CALM). The URFA Communications Officer attended the CALM Conference in Halifax, as well as the CALM Mini conference in Saskatoon in 2018. In early 2019, two URFA staff as well as the URFA President received media interview training from CALM. The organization is a valuable resource for helping URFA improve its communications tools.

Plans for 2019 include an update website that includes a members-only section, development of more member resources, and increased outreach to members who work away from the main campus.



URFA by the numbers

1,597 URFA members

85
Committee
meetings in
2018.

7 Bargaining Units

2 Collective
Agreements
negotiated in
2018.

4 Collective Agreements to
negotiate in 2019.

Hundreds of hours from members
serving as volunteers,
committee members and
council representatives.

121

URFA members who gave their time to the
association as volunteers, committee
members and council representatives in 2018.

43 member meetings, events, and
pop-up information tables in 2018.

URFA Executive & Staff 2018/19

URFA Executive



**Back Row (L to R):
Grievance Chair**

Hirsch Greenberg

Academic Member-at-large

Paitoon Tontiwachwuthikul

Equity Chair

Bridget Klest

Treasurer

Andrei Volodin

Front Row (L to R):

APT Member-at-large

Janelle Schwartz

President

Sylvain Rheault

APT member-at-large

Rachel Husband

Academic member-at-large

Pamela Osmond-Johnson

URFA Staff

Kevin Siebert	Executive Director
Frank Mentos	Member Services Officer
Colin Tether	Member Services Officer
Heather Ritenburg	Member Services Officer
Debbie Sagel (Ret. 2019)	Professional Officer
Eric Bell	Communications Officer
Debbie Head	Financial Officer
Kathy Sthamann	Administrative Assistant
Dana Tarnes	Administrative Assistant

Thank you

To our many volunteers who stepped up over the past year to keep our Association running strong, thank you. Whether it was through serving on a committee, joint committee, Council of Representatives, or marching with us in the pride parade, your support and contribution to the ongoing success of URFA is greatly appreciated.

Michael Kozdron	Barbara McNeil	Lisette Tillman	Tsilavo Raharimahefa
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Kate Cushon	Jeremy MacDonald	Mehran Mehrandezh	Louis Awanyo
Andi Martin	Peter Douglas	Terri Allard	Kathleen O'Reilly
Britt Hall	Rene Mayora	Michelle Beitel	Bridget Keating
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Darlene Jushka	Greg Lendrum	Rose-Marie Bouvier	Montejo
Michael Shires	Dennis Fitzpatrick	Grant Fahlman	Fang Bian
Marc Spooner	Greg Bawden	Sultan Ahmed	Bjoern Wissel
Robert Thomas	Jack Ito	Jan Bell	Tamara Tucker
Hirsch Greenberg	Gaynor Kybett	Mary Chipanshi	Stephen Wihak
Jody Bellegarde	Andrei Volodin	Alexis McQuigge	Rachel Husband
Dawn Flood	Youngsoo Kim	Imtiazur Rehman	Paitoon
Noel Chevalier	Tom Phenix	Laurie Clune	Tontiwachwuthikul
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Deborah Hulston	Ara Steininger	Justin Longo	Lynn Gidluck
Donald Stanley	Stuart Wilson	Rene Mayorga	Cheryl Camillo
Paul Omoyefa	Jane Desplanter Rose	Partick Neary	Yvonne Harrison
Mark Lajoie	Saman Azadbakht	Jeff Loucks	
Ted Morris	Fiji Gendron	Lee Aument	
Marianne Jacobsen	Carol Merasty	Vincent Ignatiuk	
Juliet Bushi	Keaneena Agecoutay	Michelle van Ginneken	
Christian Thompson	Amy Morris	Tamara Tucker	
Jason Demers	Jackie Nixon	Richelle Leonard	
Barbara Menely	Cory Gathier	Willadell Garreck	
Dwayne Meisner	Lionel Peyachew	Claire Polster	
Bridget Klest	Danette Starblanket	Dwight Heinrichs	
Claire Carter	Leta Kingfisher	Shelaugh Campbell	
Meaghan Jones	Trina Joseph	Amy Snider	
Amanda Noubarian	Carrie LaVallie	Pamela Osmond-Johnson	
Maxy Ojukwu	Faye Cote	Mohammed Ed-Darieby	
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