

Dear SFUFA members:

The following bulletin contains information on:

- SFUFA Priorities 2024-5
- 2025 Collective Bargaining
- Response to the SFU Academic Plan
- Collegial Governance – Policy B10.00
- Update on HSA
- Arbitration update
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SFUFA Priorities 2024-5

In September, the Association Executive met to review the past year and discuss the year ahead. The following were identified as priorities for SFUFA attention:

- Collective Bargaining: form bargaining team and develop plans for member consultations and a bargaining survey (Spring 2025)
- Gender Salary Equity review and recommendations: press SFU to fulfill salary equity commitments made in 2017, both regarding transparent fair processes for individual salary reviews and regular institutional review, which is now overdue by 2 years
- Workload and downloading of tasks to faculty members: identify the many ways administrative and support work is being downloaded onto faculty, with impacts on health as well as on the teaching and research mission
- Senior administrative searches and collegial governance: research the costs associated with increased reliance on search firms and the implications of reduced transparency in senior administrative searches
- Centre for Accessible Learning and faculty rights: devote time to the relationship between faculty members and CAL, and the crucial role of faculty in decisions related to student accommodations
- Campus safety and maintenance: monitor ongoing and what appears to be worsening conditions in university maintenance and campus safety and security

2025 Collective Bargaining

Though our last collective agreement has only recently seen full implementation, the time is already upon us to begin planning for the next round of negotiations. Our current agreement expires on June 30, 2025, which means bargaining is expected to begin towards the end of the Spring semester.

Working back from that date, members can expect to see a bargaining survey and member consultations in the spring, with a bargaining team announced early in the new year. David Broun – dbroun@sfu.ca – will once again serve as the Association’s Chief Negotiator.

Members who have suggestions regarding bargaining priorities need not wait for the formal consultation processes – your ideas and recommendations are always welcome, and are kept on file for the bargaining team to review.

Response to the SFU Academic Plan

SFUFA has now had the opportunity to review the draft 2025-30 Academic Plan, and has a number of thoughts and concerns with draft as written and the approach it takes. In the broadest terms, these concerns relate to:

- Implications for academic freedom
- Lack of focus on research and the predominance of non-academic issues in what is to be an "academic plan"
- The fact that the Plan appears more to be a branding document than a plan at all

The full response can be found [here](#).

Collegial Governance – Policy B10.00

SFUFA has submitted comments to SFU regarding proposed changes to Policy B10.00 which governs, among other things, division of authority between Senate and the Board of Governors.

The proposed changes appear to reduce transparency and weaken the authority of Senate, and raise important questions about collegial governance at SFU.

SFUFA’s letter to SFU can be found [here](#).

Update on HSA

After much delay, the Health Spending Accounts negotiated in the last round of bargaining were finally implemented for the vast majority of members in early September. A few members, though eligible, have seen their accounts held up as a result of technical issues with Pacific Blue Cross, but those are expected to be resolved in the coming days.

The one remaining area of concern relates to counseling services. As previously noted, SFU announced that counseling would not be covered by the HSA. It is our understanding that counseling is indeed covered, and we advised members to try to submit claims and share with us the results. With much gratitude to all who did so, we have confirmed that members have indeed seen their counseling costs covered by the HSA. We have shared this with SFU, but Faculty Relations indicates it is not yet satisfied that counseling is eligible.

The Association has engaged a benefits consultant and lawyer to assist with this matter, and has asked SFU to grant those specialists leave to speak with Pacific Blue Cross about the structure of the SFU plan and how various benefits are managed. SFU has refused our request, which is unfortunate, but we continue to work on this and will do all we can to ensure that critical mental health supports are recognized as eligible expenses under the HSA. At the time of writing, SFU has agreed to meet with us and our benefits consultants.

Arbitration Update

A recent arbitration hearing regarding teaching faculty found in favour of SFU. Following a previous successful arbitration award on behalf of a number of members, SFU re-hired a Lecturer into a sessional role after determining an ongoing position was not needed.

The language of the Agreement prevents using temporary contracts in such circumstances where the courses offered are "the same or substantially similar". The arbitrator found in this case that the courses in question did not meet that threshold, and therefore the use of a sessional appointment was allowed.

Fall General Meeting

Save the date – SFUFA's Fall General Meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 20th, at 12:30 pm. The meeting will be held on zoom. Details and a complete agenda will be distributed in the coming weeks.

Winter Social

SFUFA's Winter Social will be held at Biercraft, in Cornerstone, on December 4th, 4pm – 7:30 pm. Do join us to connect with colleagues and celebrate the end of the year

SFUFA Member Guide

The Association has produced a guide to the structure and operation of the Association. Prepared for the Executive Committee, it may be of use for any member seeking to understand what SFUFA does and how our work generally unfolds. Legal obligations,

procedural issues, Executive structure, staff roles – all of these and more are discussed in [SFUFA's Executive Guide](#).

Academic Discussion Forum Terms of Usage

SFUFA maintains an email list for members to share information and discuss issues of concern (academic-discussion@sfu.ca) The list is unmoderated, and there is no requirement to join. The list facilitates communication amongst faculty on a variety of topics of interest to the academic community. The Association has developed terms of usage for the list which all members should bear in mind – these are reproduced below as a reminder.

Members who wish to join the list can do so by contacting our Office Manager, Melanie Lam, at sfufaea@sfu.ca

Academic Discussion List Terms of Usage

As a member of the list (a “User”), I agree to the following terms:

1. The List is an email list. All Users will receive all the mailings sent to the List, and all Users can post to the List.
2. This List is intended to be a self-moderating community discussion forum for current SFUFA members. Users are encouraged to promote fair and reasonable participation amongst Users.
3. Critical discussion should focus on ideas and arguments rather than on individuals. Users agree not to post defamatory, abusive, threatening or other unlawful materials or information.
4. SFUFA does not moderate the List, nor does it deal with disputes arising from the List. SFUFA's participation in the List is limited to adding and deleting members from the List.
5. Users remain solely responsible for any and all content they submit to the List. Users acknowledge that all posts made to the List express the User's views and opinions only and not the administrators, moderators, webmaster, or officers affiliated with SFUFA.
6. The List is provided as a service to SFUFA members. In consideration for the User's inclusion on the List, the User hereby releases, waives, discharges (and

covenants not to sue) SFUFA, its Executive Committee members, officers or staff from any and all liability, claims, demands, actions or causes of action whatsoever arising out of or related to any loss or damage that may be sustained by them as a result of participating in the discussion list.

7. If a User wishes to be removed from the List, they will send a message to sfufaea@sfu.ca with the subject line, "Remove From Academic Staff Discussion List."

8. These terms of use may be amended by SFUFA from time to time. In such an event, Users will be notified of the change via email at the address that they have subscribed. A User's continued use of the List after such a notification has been sent will constitute the User's agreement to the revised terms.

Reminder – Alternate Contacts

Given periodic disruption of SFU's internet and email systems, the Association is collecting alternate contacts (email or phone) for members, to be used only in the event that we need to reach you during a time that the University's communications systems are not functioning. Members can send alternate email addresses and/ or phone numbers to SFUFA Executive Director, Brian Green, at bsgreen@sfu.ca