



# FAUST

## News & Views

### No. 12

### MARCH 2021

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**



Dear colleagues,

As we get closer to the end of another semester, it is time to reflect on what we have accomplished as well as what lies ahead in 2021–22.

While we are very proud of the Letter of Understanding that we negotiated with the Employer following the arrival of COVID-19, we realize it is now time to revisit it. We have started our work on these revisions at the Joint Committee level. Once we have a more concrete sense of the Academic Plans for 2021–22, we will propose additional appropriate revisions, and we hope by early June to share an updated LOU to guide us in the next Academic year.

We understand that the University is in the process of organizing an Academic Planning Town Hall and is issuing a survey to assess the faculty's priorities and concerns for 2021–22. Please be assured that FAUST will be monitoring the situation closely. Do attend this town hall and make your questions and concerns heard.

The imposition of workload reductions on our Regular Appointment faculty is of particular concern as we move forward. A layoff of Part-Time faculty probably means that we will be forced to do more with less for the foreseeable future. A recent report by the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission suggests that enrollment is stable in the Maritime universities, so at the budget town hall on 24 March, we will be asking pressing questions about the layoffs as well as what the enrollment numbers mean for faculty. We urge as many of you as possible to attend the budget town hall.

FAUST continues to engage in education and advocacy. A FAUST team has been meeting with provincial politicians to make them more aware of the need for support of public universities. Stay tuned for updates on this.

The involvement of faculty in various forms of union activism has been particularly rewarding and encouraging. Members of the ad hoc Environmental Concerns committee are actively working toward fossil fuel divestment in faculty pensions and improving STU's commitment to environmental sustainability. Shannonbrooke Murphy, Endowed Chair in Human Rights and a member of the Executive, is helping FAUST draft a response to the national campaign initiated by the Academic Alliance Against Antisemitism, Racism, Colonialism & Censorship in Canada. I have been involved with faculty in forming an ad hoc committee on Black History Month, which aims to challenge anti-black racism on campus and to make racialized faculty more visible. Also, please stay tuned for a workshop on anti-black racism work in union activism, to be organized by FNBFA later in April.

Please take care of yourself and stay safe! We really look forward to seeing you at the AGM on April 13.

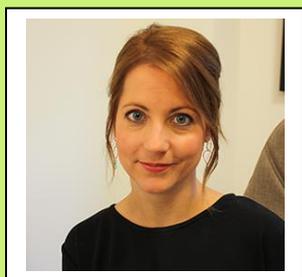
In solidarity,

Gül Çalışkan, FAUST President

[faustprez@stu.ca](mailto:faustprez@stu.ca)

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## OUR NEWEST EXECUTIVE MEMBER



FAUST is pleased to welcome our newest member, **Renée Bourgoin** from the School of Education. Renée teaches Elementary Reading and Language Arts courses as well as Elementary Social Studies Methods. She is joining the Executive **until 1 May 2021 as a *pro tem* replacement**. Please join us in welcoming Renée!

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# FAUST OFFICE TEAM: UPDATES

## TRACEY'S CORNER:



Hello, I am the new FAUST Office Assistant, Tracey O'Brien!

I have been busy setting up the new office at ECH 215, organizing files, updating the financials, getting familiar with the collective agreements, and learning all about FAUST!

Lately, we have been focused on the lobbying effort in conjunction with the FNBFA regarding funding for public universities. To see updates, you can follow us on Twitter @FAUST\_STU

## BONNIE'S CORNER



It has been a busy semester! In February I attended a CAUT webinar on grievance handling; chaired a meeting of the United Campus Labour Council; served as a member of the FAUST Lobbying Team attempting to convince provincial politicians to secure more consistent funding for New Brunswick's public universities (see below in this newsletter); and on 26 February chaired the General Membership Meeting. Looking forward to seeing you all again for the Annual General Meeting on 13 April.

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## FAUST MEMBERS LOBBYING FOR CONSISTENT FUNDING FOR NEW BRUNSWICK'S PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

A **Union Lobbying Team** consisting of FAUST President Gül Çalışkan, FAUST Past President Robin Vose, FNBFA Past President/FAUST member Jean Sauvageau and Professional Officer Bonnie Huskins, has been meeting with provincial politicians to make them more aware of the following issues:

→that performance-based funding has been shown in numerous studies to be an inadequate model for the funding of public universities

→that New Brunswick has the lowest number of university graduates per capita in Canada

→ and that to ensure pandemic recovery as well as economic growth, the province must involve and invest in post-secondary education.

The team has also presented university faculty as front-line workers in postsecondary education, whose experiences and perspectives deserve to be heard by the provincial government. In that vein, FNBFA is pushing for an opportunity to share faculty concerns with the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.



The FAUST team has met thus far with David Coon, Jeff Carr, Ryan Cullins, and Kris Austin. They will be meeting with Dominic Cardy on March 22 and Jill Green on March 31.

FNBFA has also been active corresponding with the Minister of Finance and Minister of Postsecondary Education, Training and Labour in the context of the provincial budget, urging them to reverse the decades long pattern of under-funding public universities.

See the [February 8, 2021 letter from FNBFA President, Hector Guy Adégbidi, to Finance Minister, Ernie Steeves](#) and the [March 1, 2021 reply from the Minister of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour, Trevor A. Holder](#)

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## FAUST AD HOC ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE RAMPS UP



The FAUST ad hoc Environmental Concerns committee has been busy working on three initiatives:

→to examine clean energy investment alternatives for the faculty pension plan and to bring options on this matter to the AGM for consideration

→to encourage STU to make an institutional commitment to decarbonization by 2050. To promote this objective, they are developing a strategy for FAUST to consider and are making a case for the establishment of a standing Senate committee on Climate Change

→to formulate a strategy to ensure that the STU Environmental Policy is reviewed in 2021, and to push for a credible ongoing review process.

if you have any feedback or if you wish to join this important committee, please contact Janice Harvey ([jeharvey@stu.ca](mailto:jeharvey@stu.ca)) or [faust@stu.ca](mailto:faust@stu.ca)

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# FAUST RESPONSE TO ACADEMIC ALLIANCE AGAINST ANTISEMITISM, RACISM, COLONIALISM & CENSORSHIP IN CANADA



The following is a synopsis of the report delivered by Executive member Shannonbrooke Murphy to the General Membership Meeting on 26 February 2021 re: a national campaign launched by the Academic Alliance Against Anti-Semitism, Racism, Colonialism and Censorship in Canada:

## 1. The Request

FAUST has been approached by the Academic Alliance Against Anti-Semitism, Racism, Colonialism and Censorship in Canada to endorse a growing national campaign by way of motion. This is a campaign that started in Ontario, has since spread to Western Canada, and is now looking to include Atlantic faculty associations.

The request relates to a definition of anti-Semitism promoted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) that, while mostly unproblematic, does include three clauses that could arguably be misused to suppress non-anti-Semitic academic criticism of the State of Israel, and to suppress academic support for the human rights of Palestinians.

In Canada this definition has been formally adopted by the Federal Government, who have appointed a Special Envoy to, among other things, promote endorsement and formal adoption of the definition by academic institutions. In this regard several universities including the University of Toronto, York University, and the University of Winnipeg are already being lobbied to endorse the definition. To the best of our knowledge, St Thomas University has not yet been approached.

On the other side, faculty associations and human rights advocates have opposed this definition as too broad, and over 500 individual academics from various disciplines and institutions across the country have signed a petition rejecting the definition as 'McCarthyite'. It is essential to point out that much of the opposition to the IHRA definition has been led by Jewish academics and civil society organizations.

## 2. The Issue

The issue of concern to members of FAUST relates to our academic freedom to engage in non-anti-Semitic critical scholarship in relation to Israel and Palestine, and in anti-racist and decolonial scholarship more generally. This is of obvious relevance to those of us working in the disciplines of human rights, international relations, political science and history.

Any position FAUST would take must also clearly reject the promotion of hatred including anti-Semitism. There is no question that we would suggest that there is a right to engage in anti-Semitic critical scholarship.

### 3. The Context

There are two things relevant to background context that need to be taken into account in deciding a FAUST position.

The first is the rise of far-right racist activity in Atlantic Canada including New Brunswick since 2016, as has been documented by Professor David Hoffman at UNB. Anti-Semitism is definitely one element in this far-right extremism. This is something that is extremely important to challenge, and we believe that FAUST members have a positive role to play in opposing far-right extremism in all its forms.

The second is the established pattern of vilification and hounding of Jewish and non-Jewish academics alike who have raised human rights and international law criticism of Israeli state policies, typified by the ongoing controversy over alleged judicial interference in the Azarova hiring at the University of Toronto Law School, which prompted CAUT to pass a motion of censure against the University of Toronto back in November.

### 4. The FAUST Response

A draft position agreeing with the criticisms of the IHRA definition and expressing concerns about potential for misuse of the definition as an interference with academic freedom has been prepared in response to the request. A subcommittee of the Executive will now review and if necessary revise the draft, with a view to bringing a motion to the AGM formally setting out the FAUST position. Written submissions by the membership are welcome and will be taken into consideration.

If you wish to make a **written submission** on this issue, please send to [faust@stu.ca](mailto:faust@stu.ca) **BEFORE 26 March 2021**.

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## LAURENTIAN BLUES



If you have been following FAUST's Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1726309040921417>) you are undoubtedly aware of the debacle facing Laurentian University, which has received insolvency protection under the *Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act* (CCAA).

The implications for faculty and students at the university are devastating. For FNBFA's letter of solidarity with the Laurentian University Faculty Association, see [https://www.fnbfa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Lettre-dappui-a%CC%80-lAPPUL\\_letter-of-support-to-LUFA.pdf](https://www.fnbfa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Lettre-dappui-a%CC%80-lAPPUL_letter-of-support-to-LUFA.pdf)

If you wish to sign a letter demanding public funding to secure Laurentian's future, see [https://www.educationforall.ca/lufa\\_tool](https://www.educationforall.ca/lufa_tool)

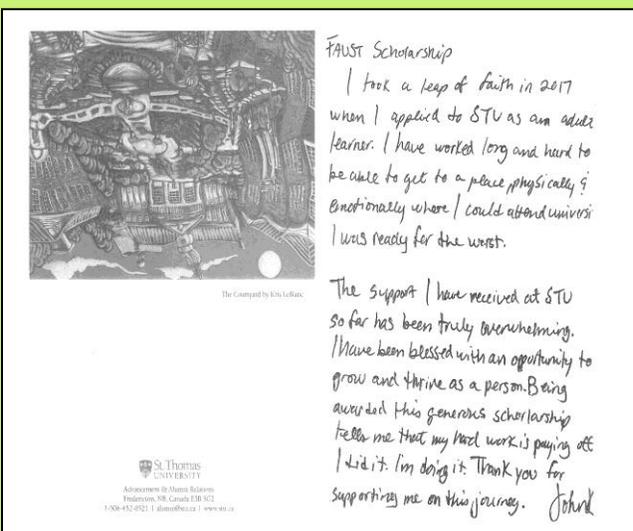
Some of you have expressed concern at the prediction expressed in “Laurentian Blues,” a blog issued by Alex Usher, that STU may well be next in terms of financial collapse: <https://higheredstrategy.com/laurentian-blues-4-who-is-next/>.

Since the publication of the blog, STU’s VP Finance Lily Fraser sent an effective rebuttal of Usher’s analysis: <https://higheredstrategy.com/laurentian-blues-4-who-is-next/>

At our GMM on 26 February, we attempted to assure you that Laurentian’s situation is unique and unprecedented. Nonetheless, it is a good reminder that we must remain vigilant in holding the Employer accountable! In that vein, we hope you will attend STU’s budget consultations that will take place at a virtual Town Hall on 24 March at 4pm.

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## DID YOU KNOW THAT FAUST OFFERS AN ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP?



On Friday 27 March 2009, the FAUST membership passed a motion in support of the creation of a scholarship with the funds deducted from the retroactive lock out/strike pay as per the Arbitration of July 2009. This scholarship is in the amount of \$3000 and is offered annually to a student on the basis of academic achievement. The student must also not be in receipt of any other scholarship or bursary. Since 2009, the scholarship has been awarded to a number of deserving students. The most recent recipient is **John Knox**, who is studying

Psychology and Music. We thought you might like to read the lovely message he sent to us!

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## FROM OUR AFFILIATES

**AUNBT** Fredericton & Saint John

The Association of University of New Brunswick Teachers (AUNBT) offers an **annual Jon Thompson Lecture on Academic Freedom**. The 2021 lecture was delivered by **Alison Hearn** titled: **Who’s zooming who? Edtech, surveillance, equity, and academic freedom in the ‘outsourced’ university.**

Dr. Hearn is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Information and Media Studies, at the University of Western Ontario.

For those who missed the lecture and wish to partake, please click on this link:  
<https://www.aunbt.ca/2021/02/26/2021-jon-thompson-lecture-on-academic-freedom-recording-now-available/>

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**Education for All** is a joint campaign between the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS), the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), and the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) and the National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE). Together, they are “putting forward a vision of a more affordable, accessible, high quality, publicly-funded post-secondary education system in Canada; a system that is ready to take on the challenges of today and tomorrow.” For more information, see <https://www.educationforall.ca>

**New CAUT Bulletin: featuring stories on the Duty to Accommodate & disabilities in the academy:** <https://www.caut.ca/sites/default/files/february2021-final-online.pdf>

**CAUT calls for review of security agency activities on campus:** <https://www.caut.ca/latest/2021/02/caut-calls-review-security-agency-activities-campus>

**COVID-19 and the Academic Workplace - Resources for Members:** <https://www.caut.ca/content/covid-19-and-academic-workplace-resources-members>

**ANNOUNCEMENT:**

Please join us on **Tues 13 April 2021 at 2pm for our Annual General Meeting.**

Microsoft Teams invitations will be sent out in due course

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**Faculty Association of the University of St Thomas (FAUST)**

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