



# FAUST

## News & Views

### No. 5

## APRIL 2019

### ECHO OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



Dear FAUSTians,

As you know, last week we held our union's Annual General Meeting. It was remarkably well-attended, breaking all recent records. So THANK YOU for coming out in such numbers. I hope we can keep it up and continue to grow with more member participation in the coming years. It really is vital that we all take part as much as we can in union activities to make sure that FAUST fully represents the interests and views of its membership.

Last week's AGM was also marked by an unusual number of formal motions being moved, debated, and voted upon. This is another important part of ensuring that our meetings are vibrant exercises in democratic governance. In some cases motions are crucial for establishing FAUST's collective position on a new issue (such as the [#divestSTU](#) campaign), while in others they may be more a matter of providing the membership with an opportunity to not only hear about decisions being taken by the executive, but also to pronounce either their support or their disapproval for those decisions. Either way they are recorded in the minutes and provide us with a record of the membership's voice on important matters.

Motions may be put forward by the executive, or they may come from the floor of the meeting at any time. I look forward to more motions at our meetings in the fall, and encourage all FAUST members to take part in the informative discussions that are sure to ensue.

Here is a brief summary of key motions taken at the most recent AGM (in addition to several routine motions having to do with meeting business, and expressions of gratitude to several members for their contributions):

- That FAUST condemns the arbitrary and unjustified imposition of layoffs and workload reductions on Regular Appointment faculty members.  
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.
- That the FAUST membership accepts and endorses the bargaining priorities as presented by the Executive Committee and Negotiating Team.  
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.
- That FAUST explore the possibility of creating a special restricted fund for the purpose of covering future arbitration expenses. MOVED for information; WITHDRAWN as unnecessary after membership instructed executive to bring forward a new motion to create such a fund in the fall once the exploration phase is complete.
- That FAUST supports the student-led campaign to ensure that St. Thomas University invests in future generations by taking the following measures:
  - Immediately freeze any new investments in fossil fuel companies or in assets that include holdings in fossil fuel companies; and
  - Fully divest its shares in fossil fuel public equities and corporate bonds within a reasonable timeframe.  
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.
- [further to the above] that FAUST supports the preparation of a report that identifies opportunities for investing endowment funds in ways that enable the transition to a low-carbon future.  
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Motions were also considered, but not taken, regarding the question of FAUST support for media access to the STU senate. Members discussed the matter at some length, with particular reference to the CAUT policy on “openness and transparency” in university governance:

<https://www.caut.ca/about-us/caut-policy/lists/caut-policy-statements/policy-statement-on-openness-and-transparency-in-post-secondary-institutions>

As the membership wished to have further background information, and more time to consider the CAUT policy, the question was tabled for further discussion in the fall.

Other important items of business included opportunities to discuss the pre-circulated annual reports of the Senior Grievance Officer, Professional Officer, Benefits Committee, and FNBFA President; oral reports from the President and Treasurer, and brief reports from the ad hoc committees on IT services, Environmental Concerns, and Sexual Misconduct. The latter committee in particular is planning to organize an important campus panel discussion on recent cases of sexual misconduct in the academy, and the importance of fully considering their implications as we work toward making St Thomas University a safer and more harassment-free workplace. Stay tuned for further details.

Overall, this AGM was a success thanks to the attendance and participation of all of you who regularly take time out of your busy schedules to engage with, stay informed about, and show support for, your fellow academic workers—even if sometimes it can only be through reading communications like this one. FAUST is OUR union, and it protects the interests of every one of us both as individuals and as a community. It is strong because we believe in the power of collective action, and in the fundamental union adage that an injury to one is an injury to all. I am proud to serve with such committed and principled colleagues; and I look forward to seeing you all again in the Fall, if not before!

Have a great summer everyone!!! And stay tuned for bargaining news as negotiations will soon be getting under way!!!

Robin Vose, FAUST President

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## **RENEWAL OF FULL-TIME HEALTH INSURANCE BENEFITS**

Please note that Full-Time Health Insurance Benefits have been recently renewed. For a summary, see <https://www.stu.ca/media/stu/site-content/documents/Benefit-Summary-Handout-April-2019.pdf>

After some prodding from FAUST, the university has agreed to add ostomy benefits (which are normally part of standard plans, but were inadvertently left out of ours) to the benefits schedule—effective immediately. There are no immediate additional costs in terms of premiums as a result of this change.

The insurance provider and employer were both hesitant to provide Part-Time employees with the option of purchasing Life Insurance as part of our group since they expect limited participation and that might affect our overall eligibility to take part in the plan. We will be discussing this issue further with Part-Time members to see how important this is to them, and how many would likely participate.

Moreover, the employer prefers to defer discussion of potential Part-Time participation in the Full-Time health benefits plan "as part of a joint review of the benefit programs and/or during Collective Bargaining." The executive will consider a joint review if only to ensure that there are not any other "standard" benefits (like ostomy supplies) that have been "inadvertently" left out of our plan.



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## ***SPECIAL THANKS....***

We would like to offer a note of special thanks to the following members for their service to FAUST:

- departing Past-President Craig Proulx
- incoming Executive Officer Matt Robinson
- Chief Negotiator Marvin Claybourn
- Speaker Jean Sauvageau
- FNBFA President and tireless FAUST volunteer Mary Lou Babineau;
- Benefits committee volunteer Julia Torrie
- And to all serving members of the Executive, the ad hoc committees, and those who help out whenever they can—thank you!!!

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## **SUMMER CONTACT INFORMATION**

Please note that the FAUST office will be open most of the summer on Mondays and Wednesdays (9am-11am and 1pm-4pm).

Please feel free to contact Professional Officer Bonnie Huskins ([faust@stu.ca](mailto:faust@stu.ca)) and/or FAUST President Robin Vose ([rvose@stu.ca](mailto:rvose@stu.ca)) if you have any questions about the union, the collective agreements, or your workplace rights at STU!

### **Contact information**

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## **STUDENTS PROTEST CHANGES TO TUITION PROGRAM**



On Tuesday April 26, [STUdents for free tuition](#) hosted a demonstration at the New Brunswick Legislature to protest the changes Premier Higgs has made to the Tuition Access Bursary

Program. These changes will disproportionately impact the province's most vulnerable students, many of whom attend STU, and will likely exacerbate our layoff situation.

[STUdents for free tuition](#) have made the following demands:

- Increased funding for the program, or at the very least expansion of the access bursary as it is and the Timely Completion Benefit to currently enrolled students to grandfather them out.
- That the Higgs government freeze tuition across the province. As Higgs proved with this announcement, targeted free tuition inevitably leads to fiscal hawks such as himself making extreme cuts to these programs, and leaving the very poorest high and dry. The high price of tuition in New Brunswick needs immediate attention.



(photo courtesy of [STUdents for free tuition](#).)

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## FAUST PRESIDENT IN PALESTINE

FAUST President Robin Vose participated in a forum on university governance and academic freedom, co-sponsored by CAUT and the Palestinian Federation of Unions of University Professors and Employees at Bir Zeit University in early April.



**HAVE A SAFE AND ENJOYABLE SUMMER!**

