PRESIDENT’S VOICE
A Warm Welcome to QUFA Members New and Returning
QUFA continues to work on its Members’ behalf as the pandemic continues, and as we look towards collective bargaining soon

By Jordan Morelli
President, QUFA

Well, we have made it through the first third of the fall term without too many issues. There have been no major outbreaks on campus, and hopefully with continued vigilance that will remain the situation when we return from the much-needed fall-term break. QUFA has continued to work with the university to move us all towards the new normal. By working together as a union and as a community, we have stayed safer and stronger together, albeit socially distanced, masked, and vaccinated.

The QUFA staff and volunteers continue to work on your behalf. The best way to access QUFA support is to contact the QUFA office via telephone (613.533.2151) or e-mail (qufa@queensu.ca). We have adopted a hybrid work model for the office, with staff spending about half of their time working from the office and the other half working remotely, so attending at the QUFA office in person is not encouraged. Please reach out via phone or e-mail instead.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to all new and returning faculty. I also would like to encourage you to familiarize yourself with your responsibilities, rights, and benefits as provided for in our Collective Agreement (CA) with the university.

The current CA is set to expire in mid-2022, and QUFA staff and volunteers have been working for months already preparing for negotiations for a renewed CA. We have launched a couple of focus groups in areas where we know there is room for improvement, such as the processes, terms, and conditions of employment for adjuncts, and strengthening our...
FYI
Dual Modes of Course Delivery
A Memorandum of Agreement, signed in May 2021, stipulates that QUFA Members cannot be compelled to teach the same course in the same term both in classroom and in remote modes of delivery

By Jordan Morelli
President, QUFA

In the May 2021 Course Delivery Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)\(^1\) between Queen’s University and QUFA, the parties have agreed that the university has the right to determine the mode of delivery for courses in the 2021-2022 academic year as being one of either “in classroom,” “online,” or “remote,” subject to a number of considerations.

I would like to focus on the fourth consideration enumerated in this MOA:

If a Member agrees to teach a course simultaneously in remote and classroom modes of delivery, the unit head or dean (or designate) will offer the Member additional teaching supports and, to compensate for the additional work involved, the choice, where appropriate, of a reduction in teaching load in a subsequent term or academic year, or a commensurate overload payment.

This consideration makes it clear that you cannot be compelled to teach the same course in the same term both in classroom and in remote modes of delivery, but rather that you must willingly agree to it. Furthermore, if you do agree to do so, you must be compensated for it either with an overload payment or a future reduction in teaching load.

The exact amount of the overload or future reduction is deliberately not specified, but the parties generally agree that, all things being equal, teaching a course in classroom is equivalent in value to teaching it in remote mode. So if, for example, only half of the course material is delivered in dual (in-classroom and remote) modes, then a reasonable overload would be the equivalent of half the stipend normally paid for such a course. There is some room for you and your unit head or dean to come to an agreement about what is reasonable. The choice of whether to receive the compensation in the form of an overload payment or as a future reduction in teaching is yours to make.

The parties also agree that the word “simultaneously” in this clause simply refers to the teaching of the same material both in classroom and in remote mode to different cohorts of students within a class during the academic term of the class. This is distinct from blended-learning approaches, such as a flipped class, where some material is taught to all of the students in the class in classroom, and some other material is taught to all of the students in the class in a remote mode. It is also distinct from the situation where a faculty member employs lecture-capture technology to make their classes available to their students who are ordinarily expected to be in classroom. This is simply an exercise of academic freedom.

Note
1\(^{1}\)The MOA can be found on the Faculty Relations Web site: https://www.queensu.ca/facultyrelations/queens-university-faculty-association-qufa/queens-qufa-collective-agreement

Jordan Morelli can be reached at morelli@queensu.ca.
EDITOR’S VOICE
Our One Hundredth Issue of QUFA Voices
QUFA’s monthly newsletter has kept QUFA Members informed about their faculty association since 2006

By Robert G. May
Editor, QUFA Voices

Because this is the first issue of QUFA Voices for the new academic year, I would like to offer a warm welcome to QUFA Members both new and returning. I hope you’re all looking forward to another great academic year.

Thanks for reading the one hundredth issue of QUFA Voices, your official Queen’s University Faculty Association newsletter!

QUFA Voices first appeared in February 2006 as a bimonthly in-house publication co-edited by myself and William Egnatoff. The lead article in the first issue was written by then Political Action and Communications Committee (PACC) Chair Richard Day, and was entitled “Why QUFA Voices?”:

... there is currently no academic worker-controlled forum in which we can express our views regarding this community. Hence QUFA Voices, to encourage regular and sessional academic workers to become more involved in what goes on at Queen’s University through open and honest public discussion.

Over the past fifteen years, QUFA Voices has strived to raise up QUFA Members’ voices by giving them an opportunity to express their ideas and views in an open forum. Over the past one hundred issues, we’ve published articles on a diversity of topics of interest to QUFA Members, from workload issues to equity matters, from collective bargaining priorities to compensation and benefits policies, from grievance concerns to work-life balance tips.

We’ve also shared information with QUFA Members on special QUFA-organized events, such as the QUFA annual lectures, the social “QUAFF with QUFA events,” Lunch and Learn workshops, public talks, and more.

Remember, QUFA Voices is your newsletter. If you have an idea for a story or profile, if you have an opinion you wish to express, or if you have an announcement you think will be of interest to other QUFA Members, please send it to me.

If you have missed an issue of QUFA Voices, you can always find back issues of the newsletter on the QUFA Web site (under “Publications”). I invite you to go back and see what we’ve been up to for the past fifteen years. Even that inaugural issue from way back in 2006 is available for your perusal.

Looking forward to sharing the next hundred issues of QUFA Voices with you!

Robert G. May can be reached at mayr@queensu.ca.
The beginning of the academic year unfolded under a veil of stress and uncertainty about the impact of COVID-19 on the planned return to in-class teaching. On the positive side, we arrived at the starting line with a high percentage of students, staff, and faculty fully vaccinated and excited about resuming in-person teaching and activities. In addition, thanks to the hard work of our Health and Safety Officer Monika Holzschuh, our Joint Health and Safety Committees (JHSCs) were fully operational and ready to respond to Member concerns.

The JHSCs were put to work early. A week before the beginning of the term, the provincial government passed a sector-wide regulation lifting the occupancy caps and requirements for social distancing in classrooms, imposing a mandatory vaccine policy, and requiring all staff and students to wear a mask in classrooms and other shared spaces.

Members were rightly concerned about the lack of information and data posted about the ventilation measurements of the classrooms and spaces they were scheduled to work in. These concerns were raised by Monika on a regular basis at the Arts and Science Health and Safety Committee meetings. In the absence of a timely response, QUFA followed up quickly with an association grievance. A settlement was reached, and classrooms continue to be assessed and monitored in accordance with an agreed-upon timetable. Any further concerns should be raised by Members to their departmental JHSC.

Concerns are now being raised about the expectation that Members should monitor student compliance with the masking mandate. Again, you are encouraged to report any refusals or lack of compliance to your head and then to your JHSC. As set out above, this allows for the issue to be resolved first at the departmental level, then by the JHSC, and as a last resort, through the grievance mechanism.

This hierarchy of reporting health and safety concerns is prescribed by legislation and is meant to be the best way to address the conflict quickly at the ground level. The statutory function of the JHSC is to report health and safety concerns, and make recommendations on your behalf about how to resolve those concerns. The committee cannot exercise its statutory duties if Members do not report the perceived dangers. QUFA will always have your back should you be concerned about retribution for exercising your rights.

Wishing you all a happy and grateful Thanksgiving this October!

Note

3 Contact information for JHSC representatives can be found on the Environmental Health and Safety Web site: https://safety.queensu.ca/general-safety/joint-health-and-safety-committees

Peggy Smith can be reached at smithpe@queensu.ca.
QUFA IMAGES
Welcome Back BBQ 2021

QUFA hosted its annual Welcome Back BBQ for QUFA Members and their families at Breakwater Park near main campus on Wednesday 30 September 2021. There were even some Members’ dogs in attendance!

Many thanks to local vendor Richard Kelly and his team at Kelly’s Catering for supplying and preparing the delicious BBQ offerings.

Photos courtesy Monika Holzschuh.

Monika Holzschuh can be reached at holzschu@queensu.ca.