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### PRESIDENT'S VOICE

## Some Misconceptions Regarding Ford's Cuts

Revisiting "double-dipping" and other issues

By Kayll Lake  
President, QUFA

The recent *Globe and Mail* article "New proposal from Doug Ford government would force senior professors to work for no salary,"<sup>1</sup> though clearly clickbait, is based on real terms in the proposed budget.<sup>2</sup> The proposal is to "establish and govern procedures, rules, and methods that a postsecondary institution shall use to reduce, including reducing to zero, limit, or alter the amount, form, or timing of compensation," which requires the government to "establish different classes of postsecondary institutions and different classes of individuals, and provide for different procedures, rules, and methods for reducing, limiting, or altering the amount, form, or timing of compensation with respect to those different classes." (Read the words; this coming from our current Ontario government, not Germany in the early 1930s!)

Of course, the suggestion that a collective agreement (CA) will be overruled invites a constitutional challenge, a challenge Ford is unlikely to win. Moreover, it would appear

### QUFA IMAGES

## Illness and Disability Panel



Robert G. May

On 16 April 2019, QUFA welcomed a panel of experts to discuss illness and disability issues. QUFA's new grievance officer Peggy Smith (left) was joined by Jessica Greenwood and James Cameron from Raven Law in Ottawa for an informative panel discussion. For more information, please see p. 4 of this issue of *QUFA Voices*.

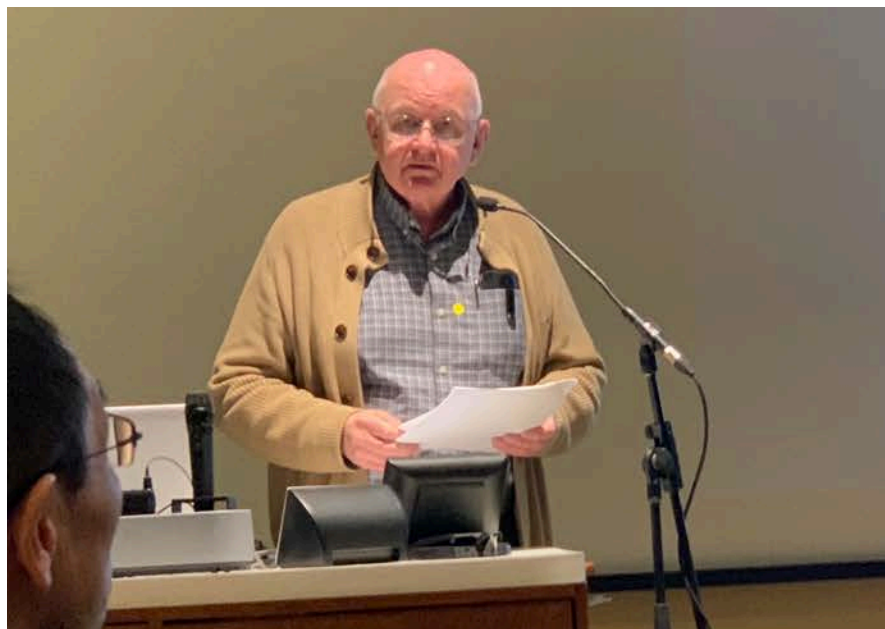
that the people writing the terms of the budget had no idea that at age 71 you *must* collect your pension. This fact, along with the terms stated above, explains the provocative title of the article.

In this article, I would like to address some common misconceptions that arise in government and public comments associated with such discussions. The format is: **Comment**, **Answer**, and **Uninformed** (those who are not in doubt of their opinion, but

who refuse to be informed. I do not attempt to deal with the absurd!).

**Comment:** It is the taxpayer's money; how dare you "double-dip."

**Answer:** It is not the taxpayer's money. Because faculty careers are short, faculty try to put away significant portions of their own money for their pensions, which, in some CAs, is matched by the university and which, in some CAs, can be taken starting at age 65 while



Robert G. May

**QUFA President Kayll Lake addresses QUFA Members at this past spring's General Meeting. Kayll was recently interviewed by Global News about Ford's cuts and the pension issue. You can watch the interview online: <https://globalnews.ca/video/5281448/fallout-from-the-ford-governments-first-budget-handed-down-in-april-is-still-catching-several-public-institutions-off-guard>**

maintaining employment. These are CAs between faculty associations and local universities. They do not involve the government of Ontario. To get to the money issue, only about 35% of a university budget comes from the taxpayers by way of grants, and so at best the government (and taxpayers) can effectively argue is that 17.5% of the monies regarding pensions are public input.

The dreaded term "double-dipping" is inaccurate. "Deferred income" is the correct term. Faculty are trying, when they have negotiated to do so, to compensate for the fact that they often don't start earning pensionable income until they are age 40 or so.

**Uninformed:** "Unions and their members will use every imaginable argument to dismiss Ford's plan that will save the taxpayer millions of dollars." Please see below.

**Comment:** Post-age-65 faculty are standing in the way of faculty renewal.

**Answer:** At one time, a faculty member could expect to interact with their replacement for a few years before they retired. This allowed transfer of accumulated knowledge and indeed transfer of graduate students. This was a steady-state situation, not growth. Chronic provincial government underfunding, for generations, under various governments, changed this by way of administrative decisions to the point that "replacements" became exploited underfunded academics with no job security whatsoever. There isn't a faculty association in Ontario that agrees with this practice.

Despite this underfunding, some universities, and Queen's is one, are hiring tenure-stream faculty. As I have said before, the rate of hiring is not sufficient, but the problem is not the rate of retirements. The problem is

chronic provincial underfunding over generations. The recent 10% cut to tuition has a direct impact on university funding will hurt faculty renewal. Yet, according to the Ford government, the attack on senior faculty is in the name of faculty renewal (please see below)!

Moreover, the very concept that difficulties in faculty renewal are new is utterly false. Back in 1980, renewal typically consisted of a single, two-year, non-renewable position for every two regular faculty members retiring. Yes, read it again if you must. That was certainly true at Queen's in STEM. The Federal NSERC program of University Research Fellowships (URFs) was started then and saved many careers in STEM at that time. We need such federal programs to counteract chronic provincial underfunding, and we need such federal funding in *all* areas now.

**Uninformed:** "The average retirement age of faculty has been increasing,<sup>4</sup> suggesting that employees are remaining in their positions longer and limiting turnover that would bring in earlier career professionals with new teaching methods, and increase diversity."<sup>5</sup>

**Comment:** Post-age-65 faculty are just costing us too much money. Elimination of "double-dipping" will contribute in a significant way to the financial stability of Ontario.

**Answer:** Faculty who are able to take pension funds while continuing to work pay very high tax rates. Assuming the average income of a 70-year-old faculty member, and assuming a contribution rate of 35% from the taxpayers of Ontario, further assuming income splitting on the retirement income (to save taxes), the net cost to the Ontario taxpayer (contributions to income less provincial income tax on income *and* retirement savings) works out to about \$32,000 per year. This is equivalent to a payment of \$15.38 per

QUFA PEOPLE

## Thank You, QUFA Executive!

Thanks to departing executive members

**By Leslie Jermyn**  
**Executive Director, QUFA**

At the spring general meeting, a new QUFA executive was elected. They will begin work 1 July 2019, and we'll introduce them in the next issue of *QUFA Voices*. We are sad to see some folks step off the committee and are very grateful for the time they dedicated to working for QUFA Members:

**Lynne Hanson (Law):** Lynne has finished her six-year term as vice president, president, and past president, and is taking a well-deserved break from the pressures of leadership.

**Donal Macartney (Chemistry):** Donal is on academic leave in 2020 and so has stepped down part way through his term as secretary.

**Greg Wanless (Dan School of Drama and Music):** Greg served most ably as QUFA council chair, keeping us on track and on time for two years.

**Amy Kaufman (Library):** Amy is also planning an academic leave in the coming year, but when she gets back, QUFA may call again!

It was an intense year, and the executive had much to contend with. They all deserve thanks for their tireless work.

For those not returning in July, a special thanks for your service. It is much appreciated by all!

**Leslie Jermyn can be reached at [jermynl@queensu.ca](mailto:jermynl@queensu.ca).**

QUFA PEOPLE

## Farewell, Ramneek!



file photo

After many years of loyal service to QUFA, Ramneek Pooni has decided to pursue other opportunities. We wish her very well in her new endeavours.

QUFA welcomes Peggy Smith as our new grievance officer. Some of you may remember Peggy from when she worked with QUFA in 2017. She returned to the Grievance role in September 2018, and we're delighted that she is staying on in that role.

hour over a year, with 40 working hours per week. Meanwhile, should a faculty member initiate their pension at age 65, if that is possible, the university terminates contributions, if they have to contribute by way of the established CA, in the first place. That saves the university money.

**Uninformed:** "This is a practical initiative to save some real money in the education system."

**Comment:** The Ford government's actions are a direct attack on the autonomy of universities. University administrations appear to be silent, saying essentially nothing in opposition by way of the Council of Ontario Universities (COU).<sup>5</sup> Indeed, they "look forward" to working with the government. Why is that?

**Answer:** An excellent question and an avenue to be explored.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup><https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-new-proposal-from->

[doug-ford-government-would-force-senior-professors/](#)

<sup>2</sup>Please see also <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/article-no-professors-shouldnt-collect-a-six-figure-pension-on-top-of-a/>

<sup>3</sup><http://budget.ontario.ca/2019/contents.html>

<sup>4</sup>"New teaching methods"? At least in STEM, which is what I know, what new teaching methods? The "New Math" or other disasters, brought to you by people who do not know?

<sup>5</sup><https://ontariosuniversities.ca/cou-statement-budget-2019>

**Kayll Lake can be reached at [lakek@queensu.ca](mailto:lakek@queensu.ca).**

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S VOICE

# A Year of Benefits Discussions

QUFA has focused this past year on bringing better supplementary medical and pension benefits to QUFA Members

**By Leslie Jermyn**  
**Executive Director, QUFA**

In place of our usual annual lecture, this year QUFA organized a panel on illness and disability to help Members understand their rights and responsibilities in the event they become seriously ill or disabled. This event rounded out a year of talking about and seeking to improve QUFA benefits.

On 16 April 2019, QUFA welcomed labour lawyers James Cameron and Jessica Greenwood from Raven Law in Ottawa, to a workshop exploring what happens when QUFA Members become ill or disabled for shorter or longer periods of time. QUFA Grievance Officer Peggy Smith also participated.

The workshop was panel style, with the experts responding to questions from the moderator and from the audience. Attendees received the latest QUFA Infosheet on "Illness and Disability."

Of note in the conversation was information about the low amount of income replacement our long-term disability (LTD) plan provides, and the need to explore additional income insurance; what kinds of medical documentation can be requested for different types of leaves at Queen's; and the futility of appealing a denial of an LTD claim.

At the beginning of this academic year, QUFA Members voted on a proposal to amend our supplementary medical benefits plan (drugs, medical services, and devices). Queen's has now put out a call for

**Types of Leave for Illness and Disability**

**Incidental Sick Leave:** This is time away from work for occasional and short-term illnesses. You are obligated to report incidental sick days to your unit head or director. If incidental absences from work are required owing to a temporary or permanent disability, you will trigger the accommodation policy and procedures, which are managed by the Return-to-Work Office.

**Sick Leave (Short-Term Disability):** Queen's has a very generous short-term disability benefit in which your information is handled by the Return-to-Work Office, and specifics around diagnosis are not shared beyond that office, though prognosis restrictions and limitations may be shared in order to assess appropriate accommodations.

**Long-Term Disability:** At about the halfway point of the sick leave (i.e., 90 days), Queen's will send you a package to apply for LTD. Great West Life has its own standards of proof, and will expect you to have your medical caregivers complete detailed forms about your illness, activity or work restrictions, diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment plan.

**ON THE WEB**

Queen's University's policies on sick leave, return to work, and accommodation can be found on the Human Resources Web site, here:

<http://www.queensu.ca/humanresources/policies/return-work/>

More information about illness and disability, including a QUFA Infosheet, can be found on the QUFA Web site: <https://www.qufa.ca/member-services/benefits/>.

proposals to insurers to see whether we can make the improvements Members wanted without increasing the costs of the benefit plan. Of note among the proposed improvements are getting a drug card and coverage for psychologist or psychiatrist care. The expectation is that the university will negotiate over the summer and fall, and would expect to implement a new plan, if one is forthcoming, by January 2020. It should be noted that we may not move from Great West Life to take advantage of an improved benefits structure.

Then, we negotiated transition to a new pension plan, which will take place if the University Pension Plan comes into existence (planned for 2021). Members voted to ratify those changes, including the addition of early unreduced retirement and phased retirement, in February 2019. The voting process for non-unionized members of the current pension plan is underway. We can expect to hear results by late June or early July. If this vote is successful, Queen's will have permission from members of the current plan to proceed to build the new plan and transition to it.

It has been a busy year for benefits work. We'll keep you posted on developments on the supplementary medical and pension fronts as processes unfold.

**Leslie Jermyn can be reached at [jermynl@queensu.ca](mailto:jermynl@queensu.ca).**

**ANNOUNCEMENT**  
**Benefit Deadline Approaching**  
**Adjunct Fund for Research and Professional Development**

The deadline for submitting an application for the QUFA Adjunct Fund is **3 June 2019**. More information and the amended application form can be found on the Faculty Relations Web site:

<https://www.queensu.ca/facultyrelations/faculty-librarians-and-archivists/professional-support-programs/fund-scholarly-research-and-creative>

ANNOUNCEMENT

## New Collective Agreement Under Development

The new QUFA-Queen’s University Collective Agreement (CA) began on 1 May 2019. Owing to the unique nature of bargaining in December, as a result of the University Pension Plan consent process, memoranda of agreement were signed with the intention to update the relevant articles of the CA in the coming months:

<https://qufa.ca/bargaining/>

This process now underway. The most up-to-date version of the 2019-2022 CA in a tracked-changes format, along with a table tracking status updates, can be found on the Faculty Relations Web site:

<https://www.queensu.ca/facultyrelations/faculty-librarians-and-archivists/queens-qufa-collective-agreement>

These pages will be continually updated as work is completed. Once all edits have been made, a finalized version of the CA will be created.

If you have any questions about the new CA, please contact Micheline Waring at QUFA (micheline.waring@queensu.ca) or Faculty Relations.

ANNOUNCEMENT

## UPP Sponsor Board Appointment

The QUFA Executive has appointed Rob Hickey (Industrial Relations) to be our delegate to the University Pension Plan sponsor board. This body will begin the work of establishing a board of trustees for the new plan, likely in July of this year. The trustees, in turn, will be tasked with putting the pieces into place for the new pension plan to begin operations in 2021.

Rob has been working with QUFA Pension Chair Paul Young (Biology) and QUFA Executive Director Leslie Jermyn to negotiate the terms of the new plan with the University of Toronto and the University of Guelph, and the terms of transition here at Queen’s, for four years and will bring a wealth of experience to this role.

While he is on sabbatical (July 2019-June 2020), Leslie will stand in for him on the sponsor board to ensure that QUFA leadership are apprised of all developments and decisions.

### QUFA VOICES Voice Your Views!

If you have an opinion about anything you read in *QUFA Voices*, send us a letter to the editor!

[mayr@queensu.ca](mailto:mayr@queensu.ca)



ANNOUNCEMENT

## CAUT Librarians’ and Archivists’ Conference

Academic libraries and archives across Canada face reorganization and restructuring, initiatives that can threaten the positions and work of librarians and archivists, and undermine traditions of collegial governance. This trend is the focus of the 2019 conference to be held **25-26 October 2019** at the Delta Ottawa City Centre. More information can be found here:

<https://www.caut.ca/event/librarians-and-archivists-conference>

ANNOUNCEMENT

## Worldviews Conference

This year’s Worldviews Conference on Higher Education and Media, co-hosted by OCUFA, will focus on democracy and changing power relations in the postsecondary sector in a post-truth world. It promises to foster a lively exchange of ideas among a diverse audience of higher-education and media professionals. More information is available here:

<https://worldviewsconference.com/>

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*QUFA Voices* publishes QUFA-related news and information for QUFA Members and provides QUFA Members with a forum to express their QUFA-related ideas and opinions. We want to hear from you! Please send your QUFA-related story ideas, news items, opinion pieces, letters to the editor, photographs, and other submissions to the editor.

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