

## VOICES IN THIS ISSUE: November 2025

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### PRESIDENT'S VOICE

## Are We Losing Our Voice?

The role of faculty members in key decision-making processes is rapidly deteriorating at Queen's

**By Karen Rudie**  
President, QUFA

I am worried that the voice of faculty members is diminishing at Queen's. There is an erosion—both internally and externally—of faculty involvement in decision-making processes.

For years, QUFA tried to partner with Queen's Student Accessibility Services (QSAS) in the student accommodation process. We recognize the need for accommodation, and most faculty members are cooperative in the process. The frustration has been that, while we understand the need to accommodate, we'd like to have a dialogue with QSAS on *how* students should be accommodated. At the risk of repeating a concern we've had for ages, Genio (formerly Glean), an application for recording lectures, gives faculty members no control over the recording to protect the privacy of students who speak in class, and no control over where the recording is stored.

With the retirement of Associate Vice-Principal Dan McKeown (Faculty Relations), the entire Faculty

### ANNOUNCEMENT

## Special General Meeting

A QUFA Special General Meeting will take place at the following date, time, and location:

**Wednesday 3 December 2025**  
**10.00 a.m.**  
**via Zoom**

Official notice of this meeting was sent to QUFA Members on Monday 17 November 2025, per QUFA's Constitution.

The Agenda will be sent 7 days in advance of the meeting, per QUFA's Constitution.

Please RSVP to Elizabeth Polnicky (ep43@queensu.ca) by Tuesday 2 December 2025 at 4.00 p.m. for Zoom link.

Relations Office (FRO) has now moved under the Human Resources (HR) Department, with the Associate Vice-Principal (Human Resources) taking over the role of managing faculty relations. While the University has assured us that this changes nothing, we are concerned that this signals that faculty no longer have an Associate Vice-Principal specifically dedicated to relations with our Members. We have been lucky so far that we have built good relationships with the FRO, and this has permitted

### ANNOUNCEMENT

## Fall General Meeting

The QUFA Fall General Meeting will take place at the following date, time, and location:

**Thursday 18 December 2025**  
**1.00 p.m.**  
**via Zoom**

Official notice of this meeting will be sent to QUFA Members 2 weeks in advance of the meeting, per QUFA's Constitution.

The Agenda will be sent 7 days in advance of the meeting, per QUFA's Constitution.

QUFA Members are encouraged to save the date so they can attend and participate in the Fall General Meeting.

us to resolve many issues without protracted litigation. However, the move of FRO implies that faculty are increasingly seen as a resource to be managed, rather than as a partner in the important decisions related to the mission of the University.

Was the move of FRO to HR suggested by Nous Consulting? We have no way of knowing because the whole Nous process is shrouded in secrecy. Sure, they send surveys to QUFA Members, but per their usual *modus operandi* at

## ANNOUNCEMENT

### Sign OCUFA's Petition

The Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA) has launched a legislative petition calling on the provincial government to increase university funding. For context and petition information, please visit OCUFA's Invest in Ontario's Future Web site:

<https://ocufa.on.ca/campaigns/invest-in-ontarios-future-fund-our-universities/>

other universities, they do not meaningfully consult with faculty. The aggregating of Faculty of Arts and Science departments into hubs, the centralizing of financial officers, and the move of FRO to HR were not decisions made in consultation with faculty or grounded in some joint understanding of how best to serve an academic vision while being mindful of financial constraints.

The process for decanal searches at Queen's, a current point of contention for our Faculty Senators, has not been updated since 1971. Well before I joined Senate, some of our Faculty Senators were proposing updated procedures for appointing academic Deans that would include significant faculty representation. Academic Deans oversee dozens of faculty members, presumably to carry out the University's mission, and yet

## ANNOUNCEMENT

### Queen's Journal Article Correction

An article in the *Queen's Journal* dated 14 November 2025 made reference to a "QUFA Divestment Campaign Team." QUFA requested a correction, as there is no QUFA committee with this name or purpose. The *Journal* added a statement to this effect on 18 November 2025, but they did not correct references in the article to this group.

the current policy for appointing such Deans does not even specify that there must be faculty members on the committee!

The trend we're seeing internally at Queen's is, sadly, part of a larger picture in which provincial and federal governments are attempting to exert more control over university operations. The Ontario government's Bill 33 imposes restrictions on university admissions and regulates ancillary student fees, which will significantly harm admission and retention of underrepresented students. The point here is that the government, not the people of the university (not faculty members, not students, not elected Senators) are the ones making the decisions. If you think it will stop at Bill 33, think again.

In early June, the Ministry of Colleges, Universities, and Research Excellence

## ANNOUNCEMENT

### Governance Watch

QUFA has created a new Governance Watch Web site to update Members on upcoming Senate and Board of Trustee business pertinent to your work:

<https://qufa.ca/governance-watch/>

and Security (MCURES) announced consultations on university governance, and those consultations led to a governance survey sent to university administrations. Faculty unions were not consulted. Thankfully, our Principal's response to the survey indicated that Queen's has no intention of undermining our Senate by providing more power to our Board of Trustees. That's a good answer, but internally, Queen's is not demonstrating that it values the voice of faculty in key decision-making processes.

Queen's faculty members are not just resources to be deployed in achieving the mission of the University: we *are* the mission.<sup>1</sup> So, we must ask, should we not have a voice in key decision-making processes?

#### Note

<sup>1</sup><https://www.queensu.ca/principal/stategy>

**Karen Rudie can be reached at [karen.rudie@queensu.ca](mailto:karen.rudie@queensu.ca).**

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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.

QUFA Voices is edited by Robert G. May. He can be reached at [mayr@queensu.ca](mailto:mayr@queensu.ca).

## Faculty Workload: The Elephant in the Room

QUFA Members' workload is steadily increasing as the Administration aggressively pushes its "austerity" agenda

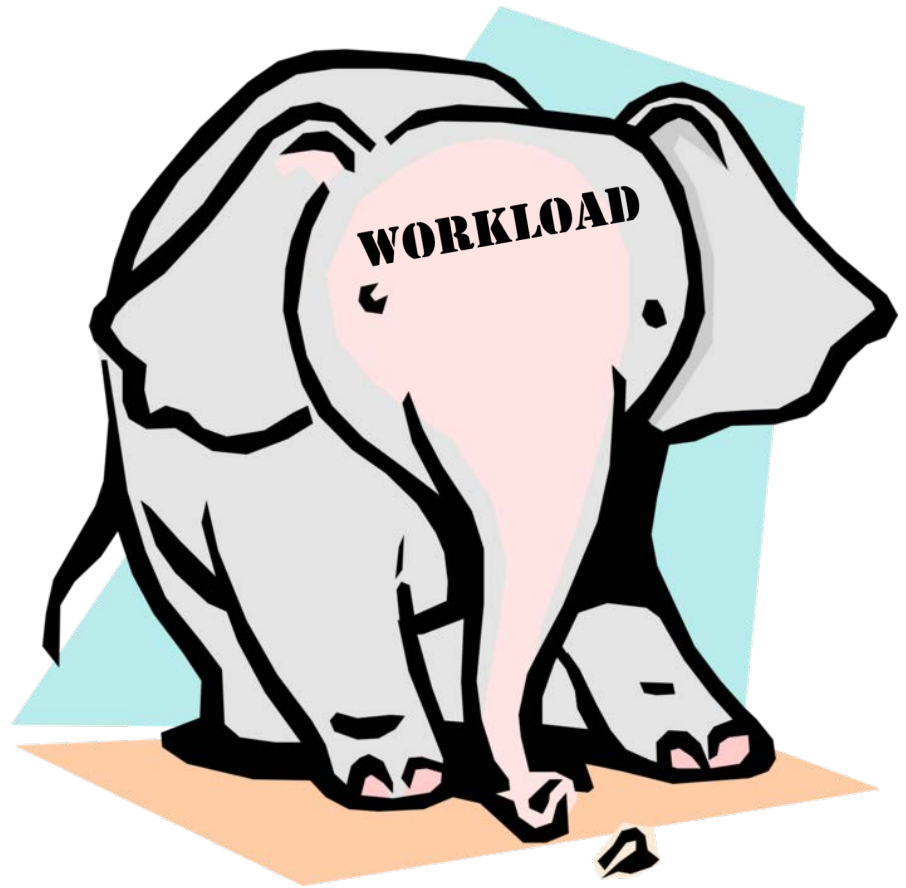
By Karen Sisson  
Grievance Officer, QUFA

I will start by acknowledging the elephant in the room: it would be ridiculous to suggest QUFA Members haven't already identified that their workload seems to be ever increasing. Many Members have also identified serious implications to their sense of well-being at work, their personal lives, and their overall health.

The Administration's "austerity measures" eviscerating the availability of reasonable support staff and other vital resources across many departments is a common theme when Members approach QUFA for advice about unsustainable workload demands. Another common theme is the Members' stress, anxiety, and fear that prioritizing so-called "austerity measures" above all else carries heavy implications to the quality of the working and learning environment at Queen's. Members worry that it is becoming nearly impossible to sustain the exemplary performance in service, teaching, and research that they have come to expect of themselves and their colleagues.

While it's fair to say that workloads for many QUFA Members are increasing, any hope of compelling the Administration to respond meaningfully to that concern will require compelling evidence that demonstrates why and how changed working conditions have caused faculty-member workloads to become unreasonable.

For example, many Members report significantly increased class sizes. While an increased class size



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**The Queen's Administration's aggressive "austerity" agenda is eviscerating the availability of reasonable support staff and other vital resources, dramatically increasing faculty workload. It's the elephant in the room. QUFA encourages Members to keep track of the various ways their workloads are increasing so that QUFA can raise these concerns to the Administration in a concrete way.**

presumptively means more hours of work are required to successfully teach the course, many departmental workload standards do not contemplate the imposition of dramatically increased class sizes. Workload standards also do not typically have any assessment of the work required to complete tasks that were previously the responsibility of support staff that are no longer available. When it comes to compensation for Term Adjuncts, article 42.4 of the Collective Agreement only explicitly speaks to higher stipends when class enrolment exceeds two hundred students.

Because of these observations, it becomes increasingly vital for QUFA

Members to adopt methods to track exactly where and how their workloads are increasing. That information can then be relied upon to demonstrate whether pre-existing measurements of the work should reasonably be adjusted. Keeping detailed records of the hours of work devoted to instruction of a course and/or other ancillary responsibilities is one way to start generating such data. Members may also benefit by retaining records of their communication with senior administrators when tasked with responsibilities that were previously assigned to support staff.

I will end by acknowledging another elephant in the room: I am suggesting

## GET INVOLVED

### QUFA Caucuses

We are looking for Members to join our Caregivers Caucus, BIPOC Caucus, and New Faculty Caucus.

- **The Caregivers Caucus** connects Members involved in care responsibilities (e.g., young children, seniors, family members with disabilities) to share experiences, concerns, and resources.
- **The BIPOC Caucus** supports and advocates for Members who are Black, Indigenous, racialized, and/or visible minorities. It is organized to collectively discuss workplace matters specific to QUFA's BIPOC Members and to work towards racial equity in our workplace.
- **The New Faculty Caucus** connects recently appointed faculty (up to five years) to share experiences and concerns pertinent to new faculty.

To inquire about joining any of these caucuses, please contact QUFA Political Action and Communications Committee (PACC) Chair Vanessa Thompson (vt25@queensu.ca).

that the best path to a remedy for unreasonable increases to workload requires engaging in additional unpaid work! Some QUFA Members will simply not have the bandwidth to do this, and that's okay. At the end of the day, prioritizing your own health and well-being is of the utmost importance. Members who are struggling to adjust to changes in their work-life balance shouldn't now feel pressured to track the data on top of all their other demands. However, for those who do have the capacity, such tracking could go a long way towards rectifying unreasonable outcomes manufactured by the Administration under the guise of "austerity."

**Karen Sisson can be reached at [ks233@queensu.ca](mailto:ks233@queensu.ca).**

## QUFA VOICES

### Voice Your Views!

If you have an opinion about anything you read in *QUFA Voices*, or if you have an idea for a story or profile for *QUFA Voices*, please send us a letter to the editor!

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



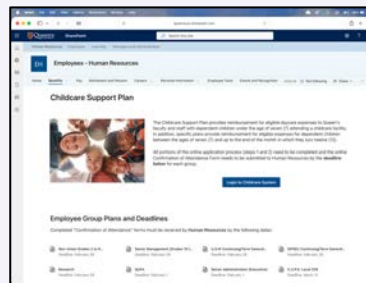
## ANNOUNCEMENT

### Childcare Support Plan Funding Deadline

The application deadline for the Childcare Support Plan is:

**1 February 2026**

Please see Appendix M of the Collective Agreement and access the application form here:



<https://queensuca.sharepoint.com/sites/HR-employees/SitePages/Childcare-Support-Plan.aspx>

## ANNOUNCEMENT

### Endpoint Grievance Update

A decision resolving the policy grievance initiated by QUFA in response to the imposition of the Endpoint software requirements was issued by Arbitrator William Kaplan on 7 November 2025.

A copy of the decision is publicly available on CanLii:

<https://www.canlii.org/en/on/onla/doc/2025/2025canlii114185/2025canlii114185.html>

Additional information about the outcome can be accessed on the QUFA Web site:

<https://qufa.ca/collective-agreement/>

Please direct any questions or concerns about this information to QUFA Grievance Officer Karen Sisson ([ks233@queensu.ca](mailto:ks233@queensu.ca)).