

COFAS REPORT
16th ANNUAL CONFERENCE
JUNE 3 - 6, 1999, VICTORIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA

June 3, 1999

Welcome Reception

Bruce Curtis, (BCIT FSA) welcomed the participants to the 16th annual Confederation of Faculty Association Staff (COFAS) conference.

The participants were invited to partake of the sumptuous deserts and beverages at the reception and the reception provided an excellent opportunity to meet old and new friends and colleagues who work at other faculty associations across Canada.

Mr. Curtis said that Mr. Kent Fiddy, who had been scheduled to entertain at the reception, had fallen ill and could not perform. He then introduced Dr. Bob Bossin, a folk singer who presently lives in British Columbia and who was formerly a member of the String Band. Dr. Boissin graciously agreed to entertain the participants on short notice. Dr. Bossin entertained the participants with his witty, inspirational and highly entertaining songs.

June 4, 1999

Defining (and Communicating) the Right "Spin": Key Performance Indicators - Bob Barnetson (ACIFA)

Bob Barnetson, Research and Communications Officer at ACIFA gave a presentation on how the government of Alberta was using performance indicators as a tool to prove to the public that the government was forcing colleges to be accountable to the public and the public purse. He gave examples of how the government has set up the parameters and reporting structures to use as a "carrot" or incentive for colleges to keep improving on the key parameters that they must all measure up to.

Although performance indicators are, at present, not being legislated for universities, many of the participants gave examples of how their provincial governments were working towards implementing performance indicators, both at colleges and universities.

Examples of the performance indicators used in Alberta were provided and the participants discussed what and how the information gathered could be used and the reasoning behind the questions asked by the government could actually mean.

The problem in not participating in this "game" the government of Alberta has set up is the perception that a college has something to hide, which brings down the wrath of the public and the interference of the government. The government relies heavily on the accountability spin they have put on the statistics. It is also difficult for colleges to gain enough points on this system to get the bonus money, which was being offered as an incentive, because each college offers different courses and the economy of the different towns or cities where the colleges are located differ greatly.

The push to acquire more points and get more money forces some colleges to use any means possible to encourage students to attend their college. Also, colleges are getting rid of courses that are not

"sellable." The parameters say that each college must provide that the courses and quality of the courses they are providing enable their students to get jobs. Unfortunately, it is almost impossible for many colleges outside of the larger cities to get enough points each year to get the bonus money. This money is a lump sum that gets divided up between the colleges that get enough points to get additional funds.

The COFAS participants noted in each of their own provinces that, although the government was not saying outright that they were bringing in performance indicators, there were signs that the governments were working towards some kind of performance indicators for their province.

A discussion took place, among the participants, on various ways colleges and universities could either resist, capitulate or cooperate with the government if they are determined to bring in performance indicators. It was decided that a strong lobby by the universities and colleges would be necessary to ensure that they were being included in all of the planning stages in order that all views are presented before such a plan is put in place. It was also suggested that since there is strength in numbers, that each association band together with as many like-minded organizations as possible to influence the government as much as possible to their advantage.

Working with(in) Government - Michael Gardiner, British Columbia Organizer for the Canadian Federation of Students

Mr. Gardiner said that he had been working as a lobbyist and organizer for the Canadian Federation of Students for five years and had worked in the BC Premier's Youth Office in the Communications Secretariat for 1 ½ years during that time.

Mr. Gardiner provided some examples of successful lobbying and some background examples of each success. He also provided examples of unsuccessful lobbying efforts and what went wrong. Mr. Gardiner also provided some examples of what lobbying was.

Mr. Gardiner said that lobbying is the procedure used to influence the government to try and change public policy. He said that private companies have a much easier time lobbying the government than do non-profit organizations. A company can either write a cheque to the election fund of the party in power, hire powerful lobbying companies, or even threaten to move their company to another province if the government does not do as they say. The only "weapon" the non-profits have is the belief that what they want is the right thing to do for either real or political reasons.

To Prepare Your Lobbying Strategy

An organization should take into account the following when preparing its lobbying strategy:

- (a) Determine what is your issue and what is your objective (make sure you know what it is and are strong in your belief)
- (b) Who must be influenced
- (c) To whom are the people you are lobbying accountable
- (d) What is the ideology
- (e) What is their position on your objective.
- (f) Why do they take that position
- (g) Why should they support your objective

As part of your lobbying strategy you have to determine at what level of government your lobbying efforts would have the most effect. There are two ways that government policy is developed -- either from the top down (ie. from the Premier's office) or from the bottom up (from the bureaucrats up to the cabinet).

Some important factors to take into account are to work out who you know in government that can help your cause. Develop your arguments so that they apply to the area of the government you are lobbying. For instance, you would have a different argument ready for the Treasury Board than for the Director's office. Let them know the consequences if they do not do as you ask. All groups in the government should be lobbied at the same time, it helps to keep them off balance. Another important strategy which has the ability to change a policy is to have a MLA ask questions during question period that would spark a debate and bring the problem to the forefront. Determine who actively supports your cause. Determine who you can work with, such as other university groups who have the same interests.

In the end you should determine what your organization can do and a decision should be made early on where it is most important for your organization to put their money and energies.

References: "Defining (and Communicating) the Right "Spin": Key Performance Indicators" (Bob Barnetson, ACIFA) is available on Bob's web site: <http://www.gmcc.ab.ca/acifa>

The Lighter Side of Living in the Dark - Howard Welsh, Executive Director, AASUA

Mr. Welsh spoke on the topic of the trials and tribulations of working in a faculty association office and of some of the special quirks and foibles of faculty members and departments at a university. The participants felt a oneness after this presentation in that, although we are spread across the county, the people we represent are all basically the same.

Organizing Sessionals and Part-timers - Jim Turk, Executive Director, CAUT and Roseanne Hood, Executive Director, UBCFA

Mr. Turk provided information on what type of worker CAUT defines as a sessional. He said that each university does not call them the same name and the work of these people is not easy to define as there are so many differing parameters involved at each university.

A sessional generally works at a university on a contract. They are also called part-timers or adjuncts. The courses taught vary from 1 course on up to what a full-time professor would teach.

Some university's already have sessional's included in their membership base. However, CAUT believes that these academic staff members should be represented by the local faculty associations. Unfortunately, groups such as CUPE, believe that these people are fair game for their organizers.

There is some resistance from full-time professors to allow part-time academic staff members to join the faculty association as they believe that it would undermine the salary and benefit negotiations of full-time staff.

There is a great deal of difficulty in organizing this group in that most universities cannot identify who they are. The methods of hiring sessionals is uneven in that departments can hire somebody using their budget and not report the person as being on the university's payroll.

Sessionals should be included in the faculty association to stop the exploitation and low paying salaries of this group. By increasing the salary, benefits and protections that can be found under a collective agreement, only gives full-time professors a stronger bargaining position.

Mr. Turk said that CAUT was willing to provide support to any university that wanted to help organize to include sessionals into their unit.

Some factors that should be considered before recruiting sessionals is to decide if this group would be better off as part of the whole association or if a separate unit within the Association should be set up for them. The ability of a faculty association to organize depends if an association is certified or non-certified. It is easier to organize if your organization is certified as there are rules that need to be followed under the Labour Relations Act. As a non-certified organization it is much more difficult to organize as you have to get the university to agree that you are able to represent sessionals.

Ms. Hood gave a presentation on the trials and tribulations of the UBCFA's efforts to organize sessionals.

She said that UBCFA had, since 1975, represented some sessionals under their framework agreement. They were able to bring more sessionals under their agreement in 1993. She said that UBCFA thought it important to represent the rest of this group as they represented 25% of the membership base. They determined that by including this group in their association they would be a stronger unit and have more political clout at the university. She said that more people are falling into this category as the university is hiring more sessionals instead of tenure stream positions.

Unfortunately, after the 1993 agreement, they discovered that they only had about 70 more members as the university excluded sessionals who only taught 1 course. UBCFA again instigated discussions with the administration to bring the rest of this group into their association. In January of 1999 the administration agreed that this group could be recruited to join the faculty association. CUPE came forward at this time to say that they were in the process of organizing sessionals and that the faculty association should stop any organizing efforts.

UBCFA began a campaign to encourage sessionals to vote to join their organization, as a vote was required by both sessionals, to show their willingness to become members, and from the members to show their willingness to include sessionals in the unit.

Ms. Hood said that it was an intense campaign to get the sessionals to vote to join UBCFA. It was their platform that sessionals were faculty and as such should belong to their association. The association hired a professional organizer and a professional writer who wrote ads, to help them with their efforts. As they were not a union, it was their objective to win votes, not to get membership cards signed. She said that it was a hectic few months. A full campaign went into full swing -- letters and flyers were sent to peoples homes and offices and ads were placed in student newspapers. They tried to keep a positive spin on things by pointing out that sessionals could become one with faculty on campus and that the association could then have one voice for all faculty. Ms. Hood said that they avoided any kind of negativity in their information and avoided mentioning CUPE at all. Unfortunately CUPE did not reciprocate and made the association out to be the bad guy and not the employer. Ms. Hood said that they found many campus alliances and were relieved when the student association's decided to stay neutral.

She said that 91% of the sessionals voted to join UBCFA and 96% of the members voted to allow the sessionals to join the association. A negotiated agreement was reached with the administration in April and 95% of the sessionals ratified the agreement.

Unfortunately CUPE had also gotten the required amount of membership cards signed to certify the sessionals. This happened even though the majority of sessionals voted to join UBCFA. CUPE has filed an application to the Labour Relations Board and a hearing was going to be heard before the Labour Relations Board over the summer.

Ms. Hood said some of the important lessons learned from their campaign was that professional help to help organize, legal writing and ad writing, was invaluable. She said that personal contact with members and potential members was important and the members of the Executive divided up the university and made every effort to make personal contact with these people. Ms. Hood said that follow-up was necessary and that a network of support must be established and that if possible, recruiting a sessional to make initial contact with sessionals was important as sessionals tend not to trust faculty as most have been mistreated in their departments. Ms. Hood said that the association should not assume that sessionals have allegiance to anyone. What they want is decent representation to change the status quo. Do not rely on the idea that they would jump at having the faculty association represent them.

Ms. Hood said that the association should always emphasize the positive -- what the association can do for them. She said that it is important to understand the legal implications of representing this group.

Ms. Hood said that one of the hardest part of organizing the sessionals was trying to find out who they were. The university informed UBCFA that there were only 350 sessionals working at UBC, however, when CUPE did their own department by department survey, they found out that there were actually over 600 sessionals. She said that, although it takes some effort, it is best if your organization found out for itself how many sessionals are working at your university. She said that a good organizer is also a good detective. An organizing committee including sessional workers should be set up. Contact people in each department who would be willing to find out the names that are needed. Some suggestions made were to contact the departmental secretary, contact payroll, get the timetables for evening courses and go to the room on the night the course is being taught and see who is teaching, and contact the Dean's office and ask for the names of sessional workers in the department. If all else fails you may have to use the Freedom of Information Act to obtain the required information. Another suggestion was to have all faculty members on e-mail. Once you pull off the names of the faculty members who are full-time, you have a list of people to approach who may be sessional workers. Unfortunately, a lot of sessional workers do not have access to campus e-mail therefore this method of tracking people down is only partly effective.

Ms. Hood said that it was a long, hard campaign. She said that it was important to keep the office staff's morale up, keep a sense of humor and to try and keep everything in perspective. The hours were long and the workload overwhelming.

Saturday, June 5, 1999

Climate Change: Cultivating Membership Support in the Garden of Doom - Bruce Curtis, BCITFSA

Mr. Curtis provided some background information on the British Columbia Institute of Technology, where he has worked as General Secretary of the Faculty Association for the past five years. He said that the mission statement of BCIT was "To provide British Columbians with world-class, job-ready skills for career success." Their mandate is "BCIT will be a province-wide, innovative organization, specializing in advanced technology training and focusing on those initiatives that increase the level of economic activity, entrepreneurial activity and employment for the province. "

Mr. Curtis said that, unfortunately, due to the cutbacks in funding and government transfer payments, that BCIT has been struggling to maintain a quality institution. He said that many faculty, as in other institutions across Canada, are getting ready to retire and that almost all faculty are overworked, have low morale and are fed up and worn out. He said of the full-time faculty members, 50% would be retiring in the next 4 years and the salaries being offered to new faculty are not high enough to attract the best people.

Mr. Curtis said that, over the years, working conditions and salaries of faculty had been on a downward spiral yet the faculty are not willing to strike to improve their working conditions and salaries because of the way that they view their work. He said that the faculty have never been very supportive of their faculty association unless they were in trouble.

Mr. Curtis said that the first collective agreement was signed in 1975 and that a former president of the faculty association became the new director of Labour Relations and was sympathetic to their cause. The agreement had good wording on job security, leave provisions and benefits. All faculty belonged to the faculty association. Mr. Curtis said that the good relationship with the administration ended when a new director of Labour Relations was brought in is seen as a hack of the administration. Many changes took place including a shortage of money and an increase in class sizes. New implementations such as computer self-learning took place as well as fewer exams and papers being written. These changes were used as fodder for the administration to increase class sizes from 20 to 100; to cut down on the number of professors needed to teach these larger classes. Although the number of faculty have not changed much over the years, the number of students have doubled.

The faculty at UBCIT have not had a raise since 1991. The faculty association found that the morale of their members whenever negotiations came around was so low that many were passive about the whole subject of salary negotiations and discussions about working conditions. Many were exhausted by the slow and steady grinding down of the system. They generally hadn't the energy to resist and there were others who thought that getting involved in demanding more money was demeaning. Many people who could take early retirement did so because they felt that there was no hope for any improvements in the problems of being overworked when government kept insisting upon more students being taught for the same, or smaller, amount of money.

A new set of negotiations were about to begin when the negotiating team decided that there would probably be no successful resolution for that round of bargaining without a clear mandate from the membership to apply the severest sanctions possible. Unfortunately, the suggestions that came forward were pretty weak. However, one member came forward and suggested that the association take a page out of the Tom Wolfe novel "Mau Mau-ing the Fly-Catchers." The gist of the idea was the implementation of a kind of guerrilla theatre against the powerful, in an attempt to bring their decisions and actions to some degree of public disrepute.

Several strategies were developed out of this one idea. An anarcho-syndicalist button campaign was launched. The union provided the button holders, a set of choice phrases were developed and software was provided to the members to create their own slogan. The university was aglow with neon buttons. There was a sea of neon proclaiming any one of a variety of messages which the administration could not help but noticing. You did not have to read the button to get the message -- the mere button itself was the message. The university thereafter broke off negotiations to consult their Executive Committee.

The next strategy came about when, after studying the membership's workload, it was revealed that the combined value of the overtime being worked by the members amounted to some \$10 million dollars. It was determined that this was a very substantial donation for a college and the union decided to treat it that way.

In a cleverly developed Newsletter article it was revealed that a secret annual donation in this exorbitant amount had been given to BCIT for at least the past ten years. The article went on to tie the donation to the maintenance of quality in education provided by BCIT. It then said that this annual contribution, which had been denied by a number of senior administrators, was about to start drying up and the administration had no idea how they were going to deal with the loss. It wasn't until the beginning of the sixth paragraph that it began to be revealed that this donation was nothing less than the accumulated overtime contributed by the members to ensure educational quality and that many were at the end of their rope and weren't going to give any more. Needless to say that by announcing the pending loss of this huge donation it caused the administration to frantically discuss this problem among themselves and answer several pointed questions from the Board of Governors. There was some concern that this article could get leaked to the media and cause BCIT some embarrassment. Again, the Institute broke off negotiations to consult with the Executive Committee.

The Institute would not discuss how the impact of approximately 50% of the BCIT membership retiring in the next 5 years would have on the remaining faculty, full-time and part-time, and what the implications of low salaries would have on attracting the best faculty to replace the retiring faculty. Understanding the fear the Board of Governors had of the media, the union prepared a special edition of the Vancouver Sun with a banner headline that read "Burnaby condemns half of BCIT's buildings - must replace in five years." At the next Board of Governors meeting the Faculty Association President held up the copy of the newspaper and drew the obvious analogy that if they were able to get concerned about having to replace half their physical plant, then perhaps they could show at least as much concern about how they were going to replace half their staff. The Board of Governors and the administration seemed to get the point.

The next strategy was to implement a "Climate Survey" to determine what the members thought about the effectiveness of the leadership staff of the Institute. The survey was done by a professional company and cost the union \$4,000. The results were predictable, the membership didn't think the leadership was very effective in doing its job and they were finally prepared to say so, out loud (though anonymously.) The union now had data to support their contention that there were problems with the leadership at BCIT.

Mr. Curtis said that meetings were ongoing and that more were scheduled. He said that by getting the membership involved he hoped that they would now have an overwhelming strike vote mandate.

Communications Through Better Design - Kerry Hall, UBCFA & Josh Piché, CAUT

Kerry Hall and Josh Piché provided the participants with some suggestions on the importance of design, content and readability in preparing an Association's Newsletter and Webpage.

Ms. Hall gave some ideas on why better communication with the members is important.

1. A Newsletter sometime is the only communication a member has with its association. Not only must it keep the members informed about what the Association is doing but it should also educate them as to their rights and any changes to their rights that may take place.
2. The Newsletter should be clean, not too cramped together and must be put in a format that is easy to read and to understand.
3. The design of the Newsletter should not get in the way of the message.
4. As a faculty members gets an avalanche of information to read on a daily basis the Newsletter must be designed in a way and must contain information that they want to read.
5. Not only does a Newsletter promote the Association but it carries the Association's message to its members.

Some techniques of design were discussed such as:

1. Readability is important. You must be able to analyze whether an extended amount of text is easy to read.
2. To this end you should analyze if the font you are using is easy to read, in particular for the older faculty member.
3. Although all caps make a statement, generally either lower case or a combination of upper and lower case letters are easier to read.
4. Try to make the letter and wordspacing even. This technique makes the Newsletter easier to read.
5. Use appropriate line lengths and justification. Even edges are should not be used because this tends to leave too much space between letters.
6. Use well spaced lines.
7. Ensure that the thickness of the letters have a regular weight, not to thin or bold and not an overuse of italics.

You should also try to design the document so that you are creating visual interest. This can be done as follows:

Proximity:

Grouping related items together.

1. Closeness indicates a relationship.
2. Creates organization.
3. Directs readers eye from start to finish.
4. Applies emphasis based on groups.

Alignment:

Visually connecting every element:

1. Find a strong line.
2. Use one alignment on a page (i.e. flush left, flush right).
3. Centered vs. Flush left or right text.

Repetition

Creating a unit.

1. Repeat some design aspects (ie. Header or footer, graphics).
2. Attracting people to publication.
3. Be consistent - organize information.
4. Know when to stop. Do not overdue with too many graphics.

Mr. Piché presented information how to design a better web page and provide information of interest to members.

Mr. Piché said that before getting started or if you wish to redesign your webpage you should go into the internet and look at other websites for ideas and information. He said that there are some differences between page or Newsletter design and web design. With a page design you know how big your page is, with a web design you don't know how big your pages is as it depends on the size of the monitor. Also you have to look at what is available through different browsers and search engines. Mr. Piché said that new technology for designing websites is constantly changing. You must design a web site that people want to view. He said that a feature of a well designed web page is a help feature. Mr. Piché said that in designing a web page you should keep in mind the fundamental principle that form follows function. Always have a purpose in mind before you begin.

Mr. Piché said that since web design is very time consuming that a volunteer should be found, if possible, to do the initial designing. He said that inputting information through HTML is fairly simple and does not require a web design expert. He said that there are several programs such as Microsoft Front Page and Wordperfect which will do elemental web design. He said that web design is a constant learning process and that the most important stage in web design is at the planning stage. If a web design is not well thought out it may have to be redesigned. As part of the planning process you should decide on who the audience will be and the purpose of the website. You must constantly upgrade your website with new information. If you do not you will not have people returning to your website.

You should constantly be updating your website with information such as frequently asked questions, what to do in a situation and who to contact, steps to follow, press releases and upcoming events. In case of a strike the website is an ideal tool to keep members constantly updated. You can put on local news or news on changes to the collective agreement.

An important part of the design is to develop a navigation tool to enable a person to get back to the home page if they get lost in the site. A search page and a simple list of links is a good idea.

Some simple rules to follow when designing a webpage:

1. Don't go beyond what your viewers have for hardware to be able to locate information.
2. Use 3 clicks to find anything.
3. Be consistent, a consistent style creates a familiar environment and makes it easy to use.
4. Use branding -- an element across each page which shows you are in the right website.
5. Ensure that the first page you see on the website is the most important. It should be used to direct people and to provide the most important information.
6. Make sure pages are not excessively long. You should cut a long document into a readable page. This can be done by cutting it into sections or having one article on each page. This keeps the site easier to read and keeps the readers interactive.
7. Use white space effectively. Too much text is hard to read.
8. Color is important, text and background have to contrast or you cannot read it.
9. Use color with caution. Checks, waves, neon etc. take away from the message.
10. A site without graphics is boring. Remember that when you use graphics it increases the time it takes to load a document. Only use graphics as needed.

Web Sites for Reference:

<http://www.will-harris.com/>
[good section on choosing fonts for publications]

<http://designrefresher.i-us.com/>
[useful articles on good design, typography, and web sites]

<http://desktoppublishing.com>
[software tips, publication templates, clip art links]

Recommended readings:

Cohen, Sandee and Robin Williams. The Non-Designer's Scan and Print Book.

Koren, Leonard and R. Wippo Meckler. Graphic Design Cookbook: Mix and Match Recipes for Faster, Better Layouts.

Williams, Robin. The Non-Designer's Design Book

Williams, Robin. The Non-Designer's Web Book

Williams, Robin. The Non-Designer's Type Book

Y2K Bugs and Real Virus Protection - Frank Madden, UTFA and Robert Clift, CUFABC

Robert Clift presented information on how the Y2K bug could affect your life if business and industry have not properly prepared for it.

Mr. Clift said that people should not panic, instead they should use common sense. He said that the worst case scenario is that there will be some inconveniences for a short period of time and provided some ideas on what might go wrong and what precautions one might take to prepare for these inconveniences.

Some examples provided of inconveniences that may occur were that the electricity might go out, telephones could not be used, fresh water and waste systems may stop pumping, food distribution might be disrupted, cash registers might not work, ATM's may cease to function and it may be difficult to get medical attention.

Mr. Clift said that whatever happens, most problems will be resolved within one day but you should prepare for three days. You should prepare heat and light sources such as flashlights, candles, kerosene lamps, white gas stoves, heaters and wood. You should have one gallon of water per person per day (and don't forget the pets). Fill your bathtub on December 31st and scoop water from the tub into the toilet in order to flush it. Stock up on ready to eat foods and beverages, in particular high energy foods.

Mr. Clift said that food in the freezer would last for up to 3 days as long as you don't keep looking in. You should keep a list of contents on the outside. Have some cash on hand (about enough to cover a long weekend without access to an ATM). Have a first aid kit on hand and a significant amount of medication. Have copies of all relevant statements for December 1999 and use them to scrutinize the January 2000 statements.

Frank Madden provided some suggestions on how you could prepare your computers at work to ensure that they were Y2K compatible. He warned people that the information provided in the session was for information only.

Hardware

- BIOS (Basic Input Output System)
 - Searches for and checks major components of the system
 - Compiles list of results of search for the operating system (OS) including the date and time returned by its search of the RTCC
 - Loads the OS and gives up control to it
- RTCC (Real Time Clock Chip)
 - Keeps time when power off
 - Different types of clock chips will handle the century change differently
- Embedded Microchips
 - 25 billion microchips in appliances and machines around the world
 - phone systems, fax machines, postage meters, elevators, appliances, security systems, etc.

Operating systems

- Dos Version 5 and Windows 95
- Both systems get the date from the BIOS. However, if its unreasonable another year, 1980, is substituted
- When two digit year prompts are offered, for years past 1999 you need to enter the four digit year even though the prompt example shows only two
- Programs showing a files date with two digits may show 00 for 2000

Software

- Customized and "off-the-shelf" applications
- Identify Date Critical Applications
 - Accounting software
 - Database/Spreadsheets
 - Communications
 - Backup software (will you be able to restore your backup?)
 - Software in other systems
 - If not written to allow for the year 2000, regardless of the Y2K state of the computer, the application will not handle 2000 properly.
- Know how your date sensitive applications handle dates - different versions of the software may handle dates differently

Fixes

- Check the manufacturers website for compliance information
- Buy new equipment and software if necessary

Ensure that you are able to restore, repair or replace your critical equipment and applications

- Adjust the date in the RTCC
- Type DATE at a dos prompt (recommended over using windows control panel), turn off your system and check the date after a fresh boot.
- Adjust your autoexec.bat file to prompt you for the date on each boot.

- Adjust the date in the BIOS
- Editing the CMOS and entering the correct date, then turn off your system and check the date after a fresh boot
- Replace the BIOS in your system
- Read Only Memory Chip - older and dangerous to replace if you don't know what you're doing
- Electrically Erasable Programmable Read Only Memory (EEPROM) also known as Flash Bios - updateable by software and manufacturers produce updates and you have to be careful to use the correct update.

- Software available from the SFU Website that will check a PC's BIOS and RTCC
- Dos
- Windows 95 & 98

- Useful Tricks
- For systems that are not Y2K ready and for which the year is not so important (such as VCRs), set the year to 1972
- Watch the news New Year's Eve, Sydney, Australia is the first to arrive in 2000.
- Remember to use four year date fields

- Remember, whatever uses times or dates can be affected by the century change

Strategy

- Conduct a complete inventory of hardware, software and systems that could face problems

- Evaluate areas where there might be Y2K problems
- List all dates that affect personnel
- External concerns

- Prioritize your risks
- What MUST be working after January 1, 2000
- Backup and Print your important records

- Take action
- Budget resources
- Repair vulnerable systems (consider possible improvements or upgrades)
- Plan for inconveniences or shutdown

- Communicate

- Will your suppliers of both goods and services be ready for Y2K?
- Let members know what you are doing to ensure a smooth transition
- Inform colleagues and officers of the potential for disruption

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Sunday, June 6, 1999

Business Meeting

(a) Brigitte Schotch, Dalhousie Faculty Association distributed the annual salary survey results and answered the participants questions.

(b) COFAS 2000 will take place in Quebec City, Quebec. Jill Diamond-Strong and Kim O'Reilly(MUNFA) agreed to take care of registration, David Bell (Simon Fraser Faculty Association) will be preparing the agenda. Liza Duhaime (CAUT) and Anne Fielden (AAS:UA) have arranged for hotel reservations and Lise Robichaud (ABPPUM), and Jill Diamond-Strong (MUNFA) will handle the site details, group dinner, etc.

COFAS 2001 will take place in St. Johns, Newfoundland. Jill Diamond-Strong (MUNFA) agreed to be site coordinator and the agenda coordinators will be Robert Clift (CUFA/BC) and Lori Morinville (CAFA).

The participants gave their heartfelt thanks and a round of applause to thank Bruce Curtis (BCIT) for preparing the agenda and arranging for the speakers and Nancy Lovelace and Kerry Hall(UBCFA) and

Denise Lunger (UvicFA) for coordinating the site, all the materials and the dinner.

Roseanne Hood (UBCFA), Chair of COFAS, said that a group photo would be taken after the business meeting. It was moved and seconded that COFAS would arrange to pay for reprints of the pictures.
Carried.

Nan Sennema and Chris Dean said they would arrange to have the pictures reprinted.

The gift exchange took place. Many wonderful and unusual items with university logos were provided for the exchange.

Thanks were given to Chris Penn and Frank Madden (UTFA) for providing the minutes of the previous meeting. A discussion was held about who should take the minutes for the 2000 conference. Chris Penn agreed to take the minutes next year.

Pat Finn, Secretary to COFAS (CUASA) said that she would write letters to the Association Executive Committees for those who participated in COFAS.

A discussion took place about evaluating the workshops that were presented. It was decided that the participants would continue to be asked to fill out an evaluation form with a clarifying sentence defining how the information will be disseminated and make it more explanatory. The participants thanked Kerry Hall for the form.

Roseanne Hood led a discussion about changing the officers of COFAS as they had each served for the past 2 years. She said that a decision was made 2 years ago to make COFAS more formal and to have a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer who would each serve for a 2 year term. At the same time the participants decided not to have a formal constitution but a Statement of Purpose.

It was decided that the Roseanne Hood (UBCFA) would remain as Chair; Pat Finn (CUASA) would remain as Secretary for one more year and Anne Feilden (AAS:UA) would remain as Treasurer. The participants thanked the officers for continuing on in these positions.

Robert Clift (CUFA/BC) is in charge of the COFAS website and asked for individual's contracts be sent to him, preferably electronically or sent to him on a disk. He said that he was putting all minutes of past COFAS meetings on the web. Another possible addition to the web site is an FAQ (frequently asked questions) page where we can post the latest info about such topics as Directors and Officers Liability Insurance so that no one has to phone or email round the country looking for the information and possibly not getting answers because people are away or too busy to respond. Hopefully, this page will help us be more efficient in our jobs.

David Bell ((Simon Fraser Faculty Association) asked that any suggestions for the agenda next year be e-mailed to him at bell@sfu.ca.

Anne Feilden (AAS:UA), Treasurer, presented her report. She offered special thanks to Nancy Lovelace and the Executive of UBCFA for contributing the cost of office supplies and the time of the staff of UBCFA in their preparations for COFAS. Anne also thanked Bruce Curtis and BCIT for contributing \$1,000.00 to the conference.

Robert Clift, seconded by Chris Penn, moved that:

the Treasurer's report be accepted as distributed.

Carried.

It was noted that at the group dinner that Mary Ellen McDonald of Dalhousie Faculty Association was given a gift from the participants and their good wishes on her retirement.

It was decided that the gift exchange would remain the same for next year.

Chris Penn
UTFA