

COFAS REPORT
MAY 29 - June 1, 2003
NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE, ONTARIO

On behalf of the members of COFAS I would like to thank Kimberly Benoit of Brock University, Leslie Dick, Brock University and Lauren Tremblay, Western University, for all of their hard work and congratulate them on the selection of the White Oaks Inn as the site of the conference. The hotel and amenities were excellent and made for a exceptional conference.

On Thursday at the welcome reception we were delighted to be entertained and educated in a session called "Living on the Edge." Professor Ann Marie Guilmette from Brock University gave a wonderful and funny presentation on how to get some fun out of life, whether it be in your working life, at home or at play. It was a wonderful way to start the conference and presented opportunities to reacquaint ourselves with our colleagues from the rest of Canada.

COFAS Constitution and By-laws

Alan Meech and Lori Morinville led a discussion on the COFAS Constitution and By-laws. Alan passed out a draft Constitution and By-laws which was discussed item by item and several changes were recommended. Alan said that having a Constitution gave the organization a feeling of permanence, structure and continuity. He said that formalizing COFAS meant that there would be an Executive Committee that would have certain responsibilities and that people would become recognized members instead of a loosely connected group of people from across Canada. Alan recognized Nan Senema's attempt to bring forward a Constitution in 1987 and much of what was being presented was in Nan's original document. He said that the working group on the Constitution looked at having a Federal Charter but were told that it was not required and would be too expensive.

The following is the Constitution and By-laws passed by the members attending COFAS 2003.

Colleen Powell (Athabasca), seconded by Laurie Blaikie (Wilfred Laurier), moved that the Constitution and By-laws be adopted as distributed.

Carried Unanimously

COFAS Constitution and By-Laws

CONSTITUTION
(Adopted 30 May 2003)

1. The name of the organization is Canadian Organization of Faculty Association Staff (COFAS).
2. The objects of the organization are:
 - 2.1 To foster high standards of performance by faculty association staff through an annual conference;
 - 2.2 To promote the interests of faculty association staff through training, development and mutual communication;
 - 2.3 To advance the work of faculty associations through information-sharing and professional development of association staff;
 - 2.4 To bring into common association faculty association staff to promote bonds of friendship, fellowship and mutual understanding; and,
 - 2.5 To deal with all such things as are necessary to carry out the objects of the Organization.

3. The place of operation of the Organization shall be [where the bank account and signing officers are].

BYLAWS

1. Membership

- 1.1 Membership in the Organization is open to any person who is currently employed by any faculty association of a Canadian post-secondary institution, by a provincial or national organization of post-secondary faculty associations, or who is retired from such employment, and who pays the requisite annual fee.
- 1.2 Termination of membership.
 - 1.2.1 Failure to pay the requisite annual fee(s) shall result in termination of membership.
 - 1.2.2 Any member of the Organization may be expelled from membership for conduct inconsistent with the objects of the Organization, according to established procedures.

2. Executive Officers

- 2.1 The Officers of the Organization shall be the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Past President, Membership Director, Conference Site Co-ordinator and Conference Agenda Co-ordinator, who together shall constitute the Executive.
- 2.2 The officers shall be elected by a simple majority vote of members attending the annual meeting.
- 2.3 Term of office for all Officers shall be one year.
- 2.4 If a member of the executive relinquishes her or his office (for whatever reason) during her or his term of office, the Executive may designate a replacement from among membership.
- 2.5 The Executive shall, subject to the by-laws and the directions given it by majority vote at the annual meeting, have full control of policy and management of the business and affairs of the Organization.

3. Duties of Officers

- 3.1 The President shall preside over all meetings of the Organization and the Executive, conduct the business affairs of the Organization as appropriate, and shall be the official representative of COFAS.
- 3.2 The Vice-President shall, in the absence of the President, fulfill the duties of the President and perform such other duties as directed by the membership at its annual meeting.
- 3.3 The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the annual meeting and maintain official records of the Organization.
- 3.4 The Treasurer shall be responsible for the collection of all monies and the discharge of all financial obligations. The Treasurer, in consultation with the other members of the Executive, shall prepare an annual budget for approval by the annual meeting and prepare a statement of income and expenses for the year previous.

- 3.5 The Past President shall be available for consultation with other officers of the Organization and to carry out such projects or duties as determined by the membership at the annual meeting.
- 3.6 The Membership Director shall be responsible for maintaining and expanding the membership base of the Organization.
- 3.7 The Conference Site Co-ordinator and the Conference Agenda Co-ordinator shall be responsible for the organization of the annual conference.

4. Committees

- 4.1 Ad hoc committees may be established at the annual meeting in order to undertake the activities of the organization.

5. Funds of the Organization

- 5.1 Annual dues for members or any general assessments shall be determined by a simple majority vote of those participating in the annual meeting of the Organization.
- 5.2 Fees for conferences shall be determined by the relevant organizing committee(s).
- 5.3 The fiscal year of the Organization shall be April 1 to March 31.
- 5.4 Should the annual meeting determine that the financial affairs of the Organization warrant the performance of an audit, then the audit may be carried out by either:
 - 5.4.1 a professional accounting firm, or
 - 5.4.2 two non-executive members of the Organization elected at the annual meeting.
- 5.5 The Treasurer shall be the primary signing officer of the organization. A second signing officer (located convenient to the Treasurer) shall be elected annually by simple majority at the annual meeting.

6. Meetings

- 6.1 The Organization shall conduct its annual meeting in conjunction with the annual conference.
- 6.2 An agenda for the annual meeting shall be circulated electronically at least three weeks in advance of the annual meeting.
- 6.3 The members shall set the dates for all conferences and business meetings.
- 6.4 The Officers shall provide a report to the membership at each annual meeting.
- 6.5 The quorum for the annual meeting shall be twenty paid up members.

7. Voting

- 7.1 Each member shall have one vote at the annual meeting.
- 7.2 Every member may, by means of a proxy, appoint another member to cast the vote of the absent member at meetings of the Organization. The proxy shall be in a form prescribed by a simple majority vote of the members of the Organization.

8. Amendment

- 8.1 The bylaws may be amended at the annual meeting of the Organization. Notice of motion to amend shall be circulated three weeks before the annual meeting. Any member may request changes be made to the bylaws.

8.2 Changes to the bylaws require a positive vote of two thirds of the members present at the annual meeting, or voting by proxy.

9. Dissolution

9.1 A proposal to dissolve COFAS must be made in the same form as an amendment to the bylaws.

9.2 Dissolution shall require a favourable vote of two thirds of the members present and voting at the annual meeting or voting by proxy.

9.3 In the event of dissolution, and in accord with the vote of the members, the assets of the Organization shall be either:

9.3.1 divided among the members of record on the day the vote is taken; or,

9.3.2 donated to a charitable organization chosen by the annual meeting at the time of dissolution.

The following members were acclaimed as the COFAS Executive Committee:

Kimberly Benoit - President (Brock University)
Doug Dorward - Vice-President (University of Alberta)
Colleen Powell - Secretary (Athabasca University)
Deborah Jackson - Treasurer (Carleton)
Lori Morinville - Past-President (CAFA)
Lauren Tremblay - Membership Director (Western)
Arlene Naugler - 2004 Site Coordinator (Dalhousie)
Pat Finn - 2004 Agenda Coordinator (Carleton)

The members held a spirited discussion about what membership fee should be set for regular, part-time and retired members.

Doug Dorward, (Alberta) seconded by Kimberly Benoit (Brock), moved that: the membership fee be \$40.00 as an annual fee for membership in COFAS.

Brian Green (UBC) moved a friendly amendment that:

the membership fee be \$40.00 for people who work full time and \$20.00 for part-time and retired members as an annual fee for membership in COFAS.

Doug Dorward said that he would accept the friendly amendment, however, Kimberly Benoit did not accept the amendment.

The original motion was called.

Motion Failed.

Doug Dorward (Alberta), seconded by Brian Green (UBC), moved that:

the membership fee be \$40.00 for people who work full time and part time and \$25.00 for who have retired as an annual fee for membership in COFAS.

Carried.

Note: The above information on the Constitution and By-laws is out of context as it was discussed over two sessions. I have combined both meetings so that it is easier to follow.

Newsletter Design Elements and Newsletter Writing

We were fortunate to have Debbie Wilson who works as a freelance graphic artist, give a presentation on Newsletter Design Elements and Katie FitzRandolph, Communications Officer of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU), who led a workshop on Newsletter Writing.

Debbie provided many handouts and gave a number of examples of how a newsletter should and should not be designed. We participated in several exercises including one on redesigning the masthead and the front page of a newsletter.

Katie FitzRandolph, led the members through a session on Newsletter Writing and provided several examples on the different styles of writing which might encourage a person to read an organizations newsletter.

Group Dinner - Hillebrand Estates Winery

The wine tour was both educational and entertaining for those of us who did not know how wine was made. Those who participated in the wine tasting enjoyed, not only the wine, but the information that our hosts provided behind each variety of wine.

The food and the venue was excellent and the gifts of the corkscrews and book on wines was a delightful surprise.

Our thanks to Kimberley Beniot, Brock University, for organizing this wonderful occasion to get to know our colleagues from other associations a little bit better.

Saturday, May 31, 2003

Employment Contracts

Sylvia Davis from the law firm of Watson McMahon from Toronto gave a presentation on "Things to Consider When Negotiating or Renewing an Employment Contract."

Sylvia said that negotiating or renewing an employment contract can be complicated and stressful. Some important things to keep in mind when dealing with employment contracts are:

- importance of Employment Standards Act, 2000 regarding employment contracts
- type of relationship - employee or independent contractor?
- indefinite v. definite term contract?
- hours of work and overtime under the ESA, 2000
- duties and responsibilities
- vacation
- leaves
- maternity leave
- parental leave
- emergency leave
- layoff
- internal complaints
- no discrimination
- disputes
- dismissal

- amendments to this Memorandum of Agreement
- other minimum requirements set out by ESA 2000

Sylvia gave some examples under each of the above that could be used when negotiating or renewing an employment contract.

Who's Reading your Email? On-line Voting Electronic Communication Considerations

Dianne Renton, President of Trendspire Canada Inc., provided an insight on how the transfer of information takes place on the information highway and the many ways that information can be stolen. She provided several suggestions on protecting your computer against unwelcome and damaging e-mail.

Dianne explained how spam works and a discussion took place on the types of spam we received in our workplace and what technology was available to deal with it.

Diane also provided several ideas on how an association could accommodate on-line voting.

Sunday, June 1, 2003

Reinventing the Small Office

Lori Morinville, CAFA led this session on various methods that could be used to improve efficiency, such as:

- get rid of antiquated equipment
- maintain electronic database of membership
- move from paper to electronic ballots
- update all e-mail lists
- work with accountant to choose and develop a software bookkeeping system
- update electronic equipment, such as a digital photocopier that can act as a printer, scanner and copier
- purchase a laptop computer
- use one electronic calendar for the office
- create an intranet directory at your office
- purge files
- hire more staff
- annotate collective bargaining manuals
- etc.

Lori reminded the members that the Federal Government's privacy legislation is to be implemented by the end of 2004 and that all organizations should review what this means to them.

It was recommended that this item be added to next year's agenda.

Business Meeting

Please see above regarding the COFAS Constitution and By-laws and election of officers. Please note that the name of COFAS has been changed from Conference of Faculty Association Staff to Canadian Organization of Faculty Association Staff.

The members thanked Deborah Jackson of Carleton for maintaining the COFAS website. Donna Gray of OCUFA asks that members supply her with their job descriptions.

Treasurer's Report

Deborah Jackson provided the members with the latest financial statement. She said that special thanks must be given to the following faculty association's for their contributions:

- •Carleton University Academic Staff Association \$ 150.00
- •McGill Association of University Teachers \$ 50.00
- •Queen's University Faculty Association \$ 100.00
- •Brock University Faculty Association \$1,000.00
- •The Faculty Association University of Western Ontario \$1,000.00
- •Queen's University Faculty Association \$1,000.00
- •McMaster University Faculty Association \$1,000.00
- •Windsor Faculty Association \$ 500.00
- •Ryerson Faculty Association \$ 500.00
- •Association of Professor of the University of Ottawa \$1,000.00
- •University of Manitoba \$ 50.00
- •University of Alberta \$ 50.00
- •OCUFA \$1,000.00
- •Faculty Association of Waterloo \$1,000.00
- •Athabasca University Faculty Association \$ 50.00
- •Wilfrid Laurier Faculty Association \$ 500.00
- •Faculty Association of UBC \$ 250.00
- •MOFA \$ 50.00
- •University of Toronto \$ 500.00

Pat Finn, (Carleton) seconded by Susan Palmer, (UBC) moved that:

the report of the Treasurer be accepted as distributed.

Carried.

COFAS Salary Survey

Brigitte Schotch of Dalhousie University presented the results of the COFAS salary survey. She said that she had received some additional surveys and reworked the information presented. She said that if she received a substantial amount of surveys after the conference she would be willing to put out an updated survey.

Suzanne LeBlanc of UNBC offered to assist Brigitte in working out new categories for the survey. Brigitte said that Rob Clift of CUFA BC had offered to discuss how to put the survey online.

Brigitte agreed to conduct the survey for the 2004 COFAS.

The members thanked Brigitte for her work on compiling and preparing the 2003 COFAS Salary Survey.

COFAS Logo

Pat Finn, (Carleton) seconded by Maureen Webb, (CAUT) moved that:

a contest be held to design a COFAS logo and a prize of \$100 is presented and that the Executive Committee will make the final determination

Carried.

It was decided that the membership director would be in charge of obtaining the proposed logos and getting members input online.

Other Matters

It was decided that Lauren Tremblay, Western, update the COFAS e-mail list and compare it with the CAUT list and to add retired COFAS participants to the list.

It was suggested that when donations are sought for COFAS 2004 in PEI that they be sought from faculty associations in the whole eastern region.

Future COFAS Meetings

2004 - Prince Edward Island

Site Coordinator - Arlene Naugler (Dalhousie)

Agenda Coordinator - Pat Finn(Carleton)

2005 - Vancouver, B.C.

Site Coordinators - Nancy Lovelace and Jack Bramhill - UBC

Agenda Coordinators - David Bell -Simon Fraser and Roseanne Hood - UBC

2006 - Montreal, Quebec

Site Coordinator - Joseph Varga - McGill

Agenda Coordinator - Cheryl Best - Lakehead

It was decided that a survey would be done to determine if the 2006 COFAS should be held on weekdays.

A card was signed by all members and sent to Ann Fielden from the University of Alberta and was COFAS's past-Treasurer, who retired this past year. The members expressed their appreciation for the work Ann has put into COFAS over the past several years and wished he well on her retirement.

Chris Penn
UTFA