

JACFA General Assembly Minutes

December 12, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. — Penfield 204

John Abbott College

If you wish to receive a printed copy of the Minutes of October 16, 2007, please contact Louise at local 5506. A copy of the agenda and the minutes will be sent to everyone on the faculty e-mail list and is available at www2.johnabbott.qc.ca/~jacfa/minutes.htm

01. Adoption of Agenda

Moved by Pierre Gauthier;

Seconded by Paul Jones;

Adopted unanimously.

02. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by Jim Vanstone;

Seconded by Stephen Bryce;

Adopted with majority with 1 abstention, 0 opposed.

03. Announcements

Faye Trecartin:

Following our vote at the last General Assembly, the JACFA Executive led a campaign to encourage faculty donations to the JAC Christmas Fund. This went exceptionally well, raising 5663\$ in total and 3817\$ in new contributions, a significant increase over last year.

Pierre Gauthier:

Law 30 reorganized and reduced the number of unions in hospitals in 2004, where different job categories were represented by many different unions. Two weeks ago, the Québec Superior Court applied the precedent of the Supreme Court's 2007 *Health Services* ruling (recognizing that our right of association is a *collective* right as well as an individual right and includes the right to negotiate collectively) and consequently found *Law 30* unconstitutional as it denied hospital workers their right to choose their own bargaining unit. Since *Health Services*, the collective right to bargain is now a guaranteed right under the Charter. This means that a government violating this right must prove that its violation is justified in a democratic society. Pierre predicted that our decree, *Law 43*, will also fall as an unjustified violation of our guaranteed right to negotiate.

Michel Milot:

We would get the same kind of judgement for *Law 43*, i.e., have the right to associate, the right to bargain and the right to strike.

Michel Milot:

CARRA has informed us that premiums for our pension plan are going up from 7.06% to 8.19% starting January 1, 2008. The CSN has prepared a document that explains how this will affect us monetarily. The increase is approximately \$500 per year if your salary is \$65000. Pension premiums are, however, tax deductible.

Faye Trecartin:

A special edition *Carnet collégial* was published in November to celebrate the 40th anniversary of cegeps in Québec. It was produced for students and was distributed through English classes at John Abbott. There are interesting statistics about how access to education has improved, in particular for women who now form a majority of cegep students (62%). We still have some copies in the JACFA office, and it is also available on the [JACFA website](#).

1. Financial Motions

VOTE

a) 2008 Faculty Lecture Series / Simon Kevan Lecture - \$300.00

Motion: *Be it resolved that JACFA contribute \$300.00 to the 2008 Faculty Lecture Series / Simon Kevan Lecture. - Moved by S. Stephenson, seconded by R. Haughey*

Sandra Stephenson:

This has become a traditional event at the College. One event proposed involves the poet laureate of Canada. Any faculty who wish to participate should contact Sandra.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously, with three abstentions.

b) CSN Christmas Basket Campaign - \$300.00

Motion: *Be it resolved that JACFA donate \$300.00 to the CSN Christmas Basket Campaign. - Executive Motion*

Stephen Bryce:

Each year the CSN asks its unions to contribute to a special fund to help families who are on strike during the holiday period. It is a good cause that we continue to support.

Ed Holland: Noted that at the last General Assembly, the Executive proposed not to use union funds to support our own students in financial need. Therefore, on principle, he opposed this motion.

MOTION CARRIED, with one abstention and two opposed.

c) Syndicat des enseignantes et enseignants de Villa Maria (CSN) - \$500.00

Motion: *Be it resolved that JACFA donate \$500.00 to the the Syndicat des enseignantes et enseignants de Villa-Maria (CSN), a union affiliated with FNEEQ for the past two years and currently in a labour conflict towards their first collective agreement. - Executive Motion*

Stephen Bryce:

The teachers at Villa-Maria unionized two years ago with FNEEQ and are having a great deal of difficulty negotiating their first collective agreement. They had a one day strike last week and have a mandate for two more strike days. This private College puts a lot of money into its facilities but not into their teachers. They are paid 2% less of what other teachers earned one year earlier, and all teachers must teach more hours, and do more extracurricular supervision duties than other public or private sector teachers. They must also be available to provide up to seven days of unpaid suppléance. Even parental rights are difficult to get recognized adequately. It is a difficult and emotional struggle.

Roger Haughey:

Spoke in favour of the motion and recognized the work of the CSN in organizing and fighting for workers such as those in private schools and daycares.

Pierre-Normand Vaillancourt:

Isn't the CSN Christmas Basket fund, that we just voted on, for this type of situation?

Stephen Bryce:

The CSN Christmas Basket is for people who have been on strike for over two weeks. This is more of a political solidarity motion.

Michel Milot: They have been negotiating for 20 months with no results.

Paul Jones: When a Union is starting up they do not have any resources as they have not amassed any funds. So we need to help them.

MOTION CARRIED, with two abstentions.

2. Insurance Report

REPORT

Stephen Bryce:

FNEEQ has made some changes to its insurance coverage as of January 1, 2008. These include adding coverage for preventative vaccinations at 80%, eliminating LTD premiums for those on short-term disability salary insurance after 30 days, deducting 50% of income earned while on LTD from the benefit paid, and specifying the proof needed for travel cancellation insurance claims. There will be an increase of 3% in health insurance premiums, which is pretty reasonable -- 10-15% seems to be typical in the industry this year. A proposal to cover MRIs done in private clinics was voted down. One of the main reasons is that FNEEQ does not want to cover services that are already covered in the public system. Unions in outlying regions did not see much benefit to them, as they cannot get private MRIs in their regions. The JAC representatives spoke and voted in favour of the proposal, but were part of a small minority that supported the motion.

Sandra Stephenson:

Is there anyone proposing paramedical, naturopathic, alternative medicine, etc?

Stephen Bryce:

FNEEQ has never covered massage therapy – naturopaths are covered for two visits per year and homeopathy coverage has been increased. Naturopathy coverage was reduced last year because receipts were being issued to cover massages. A proposal to cover massage therapy was voted down in 2006 by a large majority.

Judy Sabiston:

When you make claims, when does the year end?

Stephen Bryce:

From January 1 to Dec. 31 – the limit is 6 months in time.

Steve Orlov:

It took nine months to get his MRI results for serious disk deterioration in the public system. We all have this dilemma and we want a better health care system. He asked if any surveys have been done

to measure faculty support for staying in the FNEEQ plan. He stated that he would feel better staying in if the CSN launched a huge campaign on health care, as there has been such deterioration in the public health care system.

Stephen Bryce:

The CSN is launching a large campaign in support of public health care. FNEEQ's position is that it would be hypocritical to cover private procedures that are available in the public health care system, while arguing that private health care should be limited. It is clear anecdotally that at John Abbott, there is dissatisfaction with this aspect of the FNEEQ insurance plan. No surveys have been done recently, but we will consider doing so again next semester.

Paul Jones:

In terms of defending the public health system, Canadian trade unions have been at the forefront. The job is being done but forces on the other side are quite strong. There is a serious deterioration in public services, we must look at private coverage, but I object to the conclusion that there is a serious deterioration at this point, as I am pretty satisfied.

Violaine Arès:

When we were with other insurance companies, we had to decide each year if we wanted to renew our plans -- now that we are with FNEEQ, is there no possibility of making a change?

Stephen Bryce:

Our collective agreement says that we must be in the FNEEQ plan, unless we can show other equivalent coverage. In 1992, we voted to set up our own JACFA plan and everyone individually opted out of the FNEEQ plan to join it. The College will not administer two insurance plans for faculty, so in order to restart our plan, everyone would have to opt out of the FNEEQ plan again. We are not in favor of doing this at this time.

Larry Weller:

FNEEQ has made an error when they voted this down even though our rep voted for it. Our health care is extremely important. When we left FNEEQ to go to *Canada Life*, the world of insurance was very different then, as there were 25 companies that we could choose from. Now we are down to three companies willing to bid on our contract. We have a terrible record (or excellent, depending on your point of view) of costing the insurance companies more than we pay them. Times have changed and Stephen does not have the same leeway that I had in those days. We believe in the public system but there is a balance between public and private – no one should have to wait for nine months for an MRI.

Steve Orlov:

People in Montreal have a much tougher time than people living in the regions getting access to medical services. 300,000 people in the city do not have access to a family doctor. Could we lobby FNEEQ for a systematic policy of looking at emergency cases? Could we ask FNEEQ to make exceptions when emergency cases happen? Maybe that could be negotiated?

Stephen Bryce:

That system does exist now. FNEEQ has an elected insurance committee that hears appeals and makes exceptions to the plan. However, they have not made any exceptions regarding private MRIs so far to my knowledge. If we want to propose changes to the plan, then we have to prepare them for

next spring. I know that a broad number of our members would like to have private MRIs covered, but I do not see FNEEQ changing its mind in the near future. The FNEEQ health plan is heavily drug-oriented. I would like to see the FNEEQ plan shift some coverage away from drug coverage to provide better coverage for paramedical services. We will be bringing some proposals forward on this at a general assembly next semester.

Judith Findlay:

As a nurse I know that most people do not consider back pain as a priority. Head injuries and cancers are picked first –they do not deem back pain as critical.

3. Struggle against Homophobia VOTE

Whereas: *Homophobia is defined as a discrimination against homosexuals or an aversion towards homosexuality in general;*

Whereas: *People are regularly victims of homophobic acts and comments;*

Whereas: *Homophobia has devastating effects on the process of forming the identity of young gays and lesbians;*

Whereas: *Homophobia is still too widespread in our society and the college environment does not escape from this reality;*

Whereas: *JACFA supports the CSN's 2006 awareness campaign campaign to create a homophobia-free work environment.*

Be it therefore resolved:

1. *That JACFA and its representatives will work towards eliminating homophobia from the working and learning environment at the John Abbott College.*
2. *That JACFA promote awareness-raising activities against homophobia across campus in association with the College's Sexual Harassment Committee and the Réseau des alliés-es CSN.*
3. *That JACFA encourage its members to promote participation in the survey of cegep student attitudes towards gays and lesbians if asked.*
4. *That JACFA promote the Day Against Homophobia at the college.*
5. *That JACFA calls on the College and the other associations on campus to join in this campaign. - Executive Motion*

Stephen Bryce:

Each year there is an international day against homophobia on May 17th. In 2005, the CSN asked its unions to support this cause and work to create a workplace free of homophobia. FNEEQ is doing a survey of colleges next semester and we have been informally asked to be “the” anglo college included. This is a motion of solidarity and support for a homophobia-free work and study environment.

Ed Holland:

I will speak against the motion. Phobia means fear of – not discrimination against. It is “too”

widespread – when will it be widespread enough? I don't see why I join a struggle where I see no problem at JAC.

Peter Solonysznyj:

Agreed with Ed Holland, but noted that we adopt the resolutions, not the “whereas” clauses in a motion. He stated that he had problems with the first clause that says that we are launching a campaign against people who are against homosexuals. If people have aversions but these are not translated into irresponsible behaviour... we cannot convince people not to have aversions. I would like to propose an amendment to the first clause:

Motion: That the JACFA Executive and its representatives work towards eliminating discrimination against homosexuals from the working and learning environment at John Abbott College.

Secunder: Ed Holland

Larry Weller:

It's too bad that we cannot change the whereases. They are very poorly written. May I ask the chair – is it necessary to vote on this today? Could we table this motion until the language is cleaned up? We must not forget that JAC was the first college to allow insurance coverage for gay couples. I have never been a victim of homophobic acts.

Sandra Stephenson:

Moved to table the motion.

Secunder: Alain André.

Paul Jones:

If we table a motion does it mean that the motion comes back as it is?

Faye Trecartin:

Stated that the Executive would look at the motion before the next general assembly.

MOTION CARRIED by a two-thirds majority, with 11 people against and one abstention.

4. Parity Committee on the Teaching Profession

REPORT

Michel Milot:

About 1 month ago the college sent out a 75-page document titled *Teaching at College Level...profile of the profession* to all faculty and afterwards we sent out a consultation document. The document was prepared by a collective agreement parity committee made up of members of the Fédération des Cégeps and the cegep teachers' unions. Their mandate was to evaluate the impact of new technologies on teaching and looking at the parameter of CI formula.

Does our method of calculating CI still correctly define our teaching workloads? Have new technologies in teaching been affecting and changing the way we do our work in 2007? We have put up a blog to collect your ideas and comments– unfortunately, JACFA did not receive much response to this document from teachers or departments, in part because the end of the semester is not the best time for such a consultation!

we did not get many comments, in part because the end of the semester is not the best time for such a consultation!

The goal of this document is to setup a negotiation table and be prepared to ask for our share of the federal transfers coming in February. The portion that might go to colleges is close to \$75 million. We have a pretty good idea of where it should go and our administration also knows what they want to do with that money.

The document is divided into six sections and next week we are going to Quebec City to the FNEEQ Regroupement Cegep to discuss the results of this consultation with teachers, and it would help Stephen and I if you could make some points that seem important to you. Here are some of the points that I find were not stressed enough in the document. I'll quickly go over them to introduce the discussion. I'll welcome your comments after.

The background or context:

The era we live in is somewhat challenging with globalization, decentralization, individualization: cegep is an important social pole and should be recognized as such. Shouldn't dissidence grow in cegep?

Students: Difference of preoccupation between pre-U and technical programs, more psychological distress, more remunerated work.

Teachers: difficult to keep teachers, especially in career programs where salaries are a lot better in the private sector; teacher orientation not very pertinent; should there be some kind of national policy?

Is the document too administrative?

The constant pressure of student success on quality of teaching is a paradox.

Programs

The place of General Education is not emphasized.

The organization and management of programs, especially in programs composed of many disciplines is onerous and dominates the document.

The extra administration tasks that programs have generated are too often cutting on our capacity/availability to spend time where it counts: with our students.

Department

Ad hoc mentoring of new teachers, done quickly, when time is available.

Despite the fact that a chair is not a superior, he/she is often on the front-line for crisis management: complaints, conflicts, etc. Teaching in *milieu de stage* has all kinds of new realities in terms of time commitment, in terms of maintaining the links with the milieu.

The individual and collective reflections about what we do everyday is not present in the document enough. Course adaptation takes a lot of time.

Teaching

The differences between technology and pre-university programs poses problems for general education and disciplines that contribute to programs such as math, biology, etc.

The student population is extremely diverse, and because of that, our practice must be more and more individualized, which is problematic when you see 250 to 300 different students every year... Our job is a complex one that requires constant adaptation of courses, attitudes, and approaches. We must do more follow-up and tutoring of students, and a teacher is often on the front-line. The needs are greater than the resources available.

Concerning the CI

The following is not taken into account: The complexity of teaching a high number of different courses.

The preparation of a new course, or a new teacher teaching for the first time....

Participation on program committee, notably for GenEd and contributing disciplines...

In career programs: be a teacher and mastering all the competencies is sometimes an overwhelming job!

Technology In the Classroom (TIC)

It is less and less of a choice to work or not with TIC... It certainly takes a lot of someone's time!

The imposition of closed environment like LEA - does it impose a WAY as opposed to being an available tool? The link between Course Management System (CMS) with professional autonomy is questionable...

Professional Development

Although done very differently in the different programs/disciplines, it seems that not enough time is allowed for Professional Development, for example in May when teachers are exhausted. The early start in January makes it difficult to organize PD sessions. The schedule of teachers is adapted more and more to student needs, namely their remunerated work.

General Comment

Education is not a priority in our society. If it was, the loan and bursary system would be more generous, education would really be free, and our working conditions would be better. The fact that it is not a priority, that we like it or not has a very negative impact on the way we do our work and our working conditions both agreed and social...

I have been teaching here for 10 years now, 16 years total: during the first 4-5 years, I was running after my breath. I may have had one year where I could take a deep breath and surf on well done and achieved prepared classes, but now I am thinking more and more of getting myself an oxygen mask. Okay, I know that union stuff takes a lot, a family takes a lot, students expect more and more, but is it normal that I have lost most of my evenings and half of my weekend?

Sandra Stephenson:

I want to thank Michel for looking into this so thoroughly. When I saw it, I did not realize that this was such an important document. I guess that it was due to fatigue. Not only are we talking about

defining for ourselves what we do here but also over \$1 million will be put elsewhere if we let our DG go with this. The most serious stresser in Montreal is school shootings. If we could come up with a response mechanism -- but with student cellphones? These are occupational hazards.

Paul Jones:

I read the whole document and it is an amazing read. It's like lifting the cover and realizing what is happening underneath and how bureaucratic our teaching environment has become -- we are teaching competencies and content. In the public sector they are critiquing the whole competency-based schema of things. They were able to impose this whole schema of looking at the world and this document takes this notion for granted. Maybe we should question this at a fundamental level. My second point is on technologies in the classroom and their inevitability -- but we can still say no to some of these. We are saying no to the automobile and are finding new ways. Cellphones, laptops and the whole deal in the classroom needs to be discussed. I think that we have gone too far when we start asking ourselves how to communicate to our students and through which format? There are a lot of people working like you day and night through this bureaucracy, and this is where this document is weak. I am one of the geisers that work hard to make sure that the department is still the central authority and this document imposes a certain sliding into these bureaucratic entities. Most of the resources are going to those people who are doing those jobs, and it is just unfair. One full-time equivalent of release time for a department divided between six people?

Ute Beffert:

In the Nursing program where we do *stages*, we have to recruit professionals from the field and when they see what we have to do as a teacher, they do not come back again. Nurses take a \$10 000 pay cut when they come in teaching so we cannot fill out the job requirements. There is also student success to deal with. How do I make sure that students succeed while keeping out the students that are so weak that they should not be out in the field, as we do not want a student to kill anyone? Some people should not pass, and we have difficulty doing so as student success is being imposed. The role of the chair is critical, yet the chairperson has no power and has no support.

June Riley:

I wanted to thank you Michel and thought that the section on the CI was quite vague. Technology is not a panacea and experience shows us that every single piece of technology breaks. Teaching is much messier than perfect Powerpoint presentations. The budget needs to go to the teachers, not the administration.

Mark McGuire:

Thank you Michel. Every year we meet 300 new students and I just find the effect that these numbers have on us it so exhausting. All of these things put a stress on us. Could money be put on a ratio for teachers to students? I have been given a release time for sustainability on campus and all of these, and our environment will be addressed -- but what sustains us? There are 170 indicators, gays, student-teacher ratios, teacher burn-out rates issues, etc. Sustainability is more than just recycling cans.

Ed Holland:

We have to get rid of the technology and go back to medieval university.

Caroline Viger:

Is there a mention of integrating students with disabilities in that document?

Michel Milot:

Yes there is, although it could be emphasized more.

Caroline Viger:

Having a blind student in Physics required a whole prep just for him. So we need more resources for us to teach students with disabilities.

Andrew Cuk:

I think that there is a balance where you are comfortable with technology. The more I go with Powerpoint presentations the more I spoon-feed my students. What is important to us in the Theatre department is the huge number of students and not getting the resources that go with that number. We have had the same budget for a show for 30 years. The concept of student to teacher ratio is important as we cannot teach an acting class with 30 students. I would really like to see "quality education" rather than "quantity education."

Terri Berghello:

I thank you for this. Coordinating *stage* placements for our students is almost a political struggle at times. It is an ethical dilemma as we are bound by our own student success versus patient safety dilemma. I am a huge advocate of student success to help guide them out of the program, but administration must recognize that classroom size is often larger than 75. Could you please clarify one comment that you made on how student success is having a negative impact on our teaching?

Michel Milot:

Student success is putting pressure on us as teachers as they ask us to do better with fewer resources. Concerning *stage*, the only thing that is considered in the CI formula is *Évaluation de stage, suivi de stage* (supervising students while on *stage*); preparation is not part of it.

Stephen Bryce:

We were asked to "validate" this document – is it an accurate description of our teaching conditions today? I find that overall it is a pretty good description of what we do. However, the tool used to measure our workloads has changed since 1989 – the CI. The 1993 cegep reforms – including competency-based education, the program approach, locally developed programs, the introduction of new technology – have changed our jobs dramatically, yet we are still using the same one-size-fits all formula as before. No significant addition of resources has accompanied these changes. The CI formula allows the college to assign you to work at 110%, but if you drop to 99.5%, your salary can be reduced. This needs to be addressed. Regarding new technology, not everyone wants to do it, but some of us, particularly in technology programs, have to or want to try it out, but this is not recognized as an increase in our workload. I don't have any problems in validating this document, but then what? Are there more resources coming our way?

Daniel Gosselin:

If you would like to give us more comments, you can do so on the JACFA blog.

June Riley:

I agree with Stephen that it is the teachers who should decide if we want to use it. It is the CI formula that is the crux of the matter. Let's make a suggestion to cut New faculty orientation to one day instead of two; that would really help new teachers. Mentoring to help new teachers is where the

energy and resources need to go.

Mark McGuire:

Has the College ever considered creating teaching assistants? More meaningful than a fast food job...
Has this ever been considered?

Michel Milot:

A real national program of bursaries would be very helpful also. Thank you for all of your valuable comments. It allows us to see what we do and although our goal is to prepare for a negotiation table, the fact that this is done *outside* the usual negotiation frame is interesting and important.

5. Evaluation of Teaching

REPORT

Jim Leeke:

Three consultation meetings were held with teachers to discuss the *Evaluation of Teaching* document that was sent to all teachers in October. From this stemmed a lot of valuable feedback and changes were made to the documents. Volunteer teachers tried the revised questionnaire and procedure in their classes and will be receiving the results in January. You may see some duplication in questions 18 and 19. The reason is that there was a disagreement at the Quality Education Committee and so it was decided to go with both of the questions. You can see that it is still a work-in-progress.

In Winter 2008, new teachers starting in January will begin the process leading to an administrative evaluation in their third semester. 10% of current teachers will be picked randomly for a formative evaluation. A teacher chosen may ask to delay their turn (e.g. if they are teaching a new course, etc.).

June Riley:

Did you change the cover sheet where it said that it could affect our careers?

Jim Leeke:

We will discuss this issue after we receive feedback from the teachers who tried the system this semester, the Quality Education Committee will meet later in January to discuss changes.

Stephen Bryce:

Can all teachers run this in their class next semester?

Jim Leeke:

In the policy, the administration commits to providing the resources for any teacher to do an evaluation in their classes each semester, with the results going just to that teacher.

Alain André moved to close the meeting.

Seconded by Violaine Arès.

Adopted unanimously.

