

## JACFA NEWS

FEBRUARY 2013

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

FNEEQ REPORT 2

HARASSMENT  
AWARENESS  
COMMITTEE 4

SOCIAL REPORT 4

HIRING COM-  
MITTEES 5PROGRAM  
APPROACH 6HEALTH AND  
SAFETY REPORT 8

## JUST SAY NO



On Wednesday, January 30, the JACFA Executive met with the administration

and, not surprisingly, the Desjardins donation to the College came up. According to the Director-General, Desjardins required a confidentiality clause to prevent its competitors from knowing what it is receiving in return. She said that the administration and the Board judged that the terms were reasonable.

What we do know is that our faculty representatives on the Board did not support this donation, in part due to the rushed and secretive nature of the process and the confidentiality clause. The JACFA Executive calls on the College

and its Foundation to fully comply with their own Donor Recognition Policy which commits to being “accountable, ethical and transparent” in carrying out fundraising activities. Asking the John Abbott College community to accept this on faith alone does not make the grade. In the immortal words of Ronald Reagan, “Trust, but verify.”

We work in a public institution. This means that we have a special responsibility to be open about our decision-making and our funding. Our position is that when businesses demand secrecy for charitable donations for which they receive a tax benefit, our College should **just say no**.

## ACADEMIC COUNCIL UPDATE: SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS

One issue addressed at the last Council meeting on January 18 was a “Getting the Bus Started” discussion on special needs students. A presentation by PDHT teachers was an eye opening look into issues with special needs students. Council did not have time

to deliberate after the presentation, but the issue will be on the agenda for the Council meeting of Feb 15. If you have issues you would like brought up, please approach an [Academic Council member](#) to let us know how your experiences have been with special needs students. The

goal is to eventually find an optimal way of teaching these students and to use the resources we have to the best of our abilities. But do we have enough resources? Are we able to properly integrate these students into our classes? Will they be able to meet the competencies in our academic programs?

These are just a few questions for thought.

For more Council news, please join the Academic Council Community on the JAC Portal.

We're on the web:

[www.johnabbott.qc.ca](http://www.johnabbott.qc.ca)

## FNEEQ REPORT

The Parti Québécois' promise to hold a *Sommet sur l'éducation supérieure* is in the process of being fulfilled. Our union federation, FNEEQ, is represented by two members of its Executive, Sylvain Marois (FNEEQ Vice-President) and its beloved President Caroline Senneville.

A series of pre-Summit thematic meetings is now concluded.

The Summit itself will take place in Montréal in mid-February.

The government's approach also includes a citizens' component with [a website](#) and a [Facebook page](#), citizens' forums and a "winter school" that will bring together 400 to 500 young people [see box below].

FNEEQ's interventions are based primarily on positions that it has taken in the past on these issues, as well as on the [CSN's education platform](#).

The new *Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur, de la Recherche, de la Science et de la Technologie* (MESRST), as we no longer are part of the MELS, is giving a great deal of importance to comments received from the internet. Léo Bureau-Blouin (Laval-des-Rapides' MNA) picked up on many suggestions made by our affiliated members (in particular, from university lecturers), as well as from FNEEQ. It's important therefore for all of us to use this tool and to take part in the discussion by posting on the [Facebook page](#).

### First Meeting Nov. 29-30 (Québec): The quality of higher education

It was emphasized that it can be very difficult to define "quality", and in particular "quality of teaching". A consensus needs to be met at on specific issues, such as the student/teacher ratio. In order for the participants to be able to conclude that the quality of education is very good, this will first have to be defined. Overall, the subject most discussed and debated was whether an external organization should be created "with a mandate to oversee the quality of teaching". While there was some level of consensus on the need for a mechanism for coordinating universities, there was no agreement on what it should be called, its composition, its functions, or its mandate...

### Second Meeting Dec. 13-14 (Trois-Rivières): Accessibility and participation in higher education

While the discussion included geographical accessibility, issues surrounding financial accessibility were the main focus by numerous participants. A major increase in tuition fees appears to be rejected by a very large majority of participants, but the debate is certainly not settled, as positions ranged anywhere from indexation (not very clearly defined) to eliminating tuition altogether. Minister Pierre Duchesne noted that he had put in place a working group to evaluate the costs of eliminating tuition so that, by the time the summit begins in mid Feb 2013, we will be in a better position to evaluate the situation. FNEEQ made the case that there is agreement that the spectacular progress made in Québec over the past forty years coincides with the creation of the cegep system, of the lack of resources for special-needs students, of the need to support student retention, of the importance of coordinating the development of the systems and questioned the growing phenomenon of outlying campuses of both universities and colleges.

### Third Meeting Jan. 17-18 (Sherbrooke): university financing and governance

An orgy of opposing numbers... Everyone had their own vision and figures with regard to the current state and needs of universities. How could a same situation have so many contradicting analyses? For FNEEQ one fact rose from the debates: we must all have the same evaluation grid when looking into university financing. For [CREPUQ](#) and the business community, the government must urgently invest massively more money into the universities; according to FNEEQ, it's the financing methods and formulas that must be revised. While, when debating governance, the Boards of Governors composition was at the heart of debates, again opposing CREPUQ (wanting mainly outside representatives) and employee and student groups (opting for a more collegial *Lakeside view global vision*<sup>tm</sup>, with a majority of internal representatives). Minister Duchesne seemed confident there was a consensus for simpler and more transparent financial rules.

## FNEEQ REPORT (CONT'D)

The final meeting, on the contribution of universities and research to the development of Quebec, is taking place in Rimouski as we go to press.

*N.B. Article mostly plagiarized in a Frankenstein kind of way from FNEEQ website and communiqués.*

### Citizens' Forum

In order to allow the greatest possible number of people to express their opinion and to participate in the debate on higher education, the [Institut du Nouveau Monde](#) (INM) has been organizing a series of citizens' forums around the province. A French-language forum will take place in Montréal on February 2 at UQAM and an English-language forum is also planned in Montréal at Concordia University.

### The Budget Chainsaw Massacre 3D

FNEEQ is justifiably outraged at the recent announcement that funding agreements signed with the Liberal government would not be respected. These agreements gave more resources to cegeps that had to deal with making up for last year's student strikes by cramming almost three semesters into one academic year. This funding is being cut by half, even though teachers have already been hired!

To make matters worse, there is an additional cut of \$21.5M in the cegep system (and \$124M to universities). At John Abbott, this translates into almost \$600K less in our operating budgets.

*To the dangers of under-funding and ill-funding, we now must add the perils of de-funding...*

At any time you can look into FNEEQ public affairs via their [website](#), [Facebook page](#) or [Twitter account](#). In addition, we, at JACFA, try to keep you up to date with our [webpage](#) (of course) and our [Facebook page](#).



## NEXT JACFA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, February 20

5:30 p.m.

Health Sciences Building - 606

**Board of Governors Faculty Representative Election at 5:30 p.m.**

A light supper will be served from 5:00 p.m. in the Faculty Lounge (H-101)

**You will receive the agenda during the week of February 11**

## HARASSMENT AWARENESS COMMITTEE - CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Harassment in the workplace is a growing concern: it can ruin the relationship between colleagues, lead to shouting matches in meetings, fuel series of flaming e-mails and eventually poison the atmosphere of an entire department. John Abbott College has a policy concerning harassment ([policy no. 4](#)). Although the policy addresses serious offences, experience has shown it doesn't provide a mechanism to resolve irritants and smaller conflicts, which then tend to fester and grow into bitter feuds where both parties are entrenched in their positions.

The College asked Lise Moisan, a professional mediator, to suggest better tools to resolve conflict at John Abbott. One of Ms. Moisan's observations was that "...harassment complaints are often used by colleagues who are caught in a conflict dynamic as a tool for confrontation and 'resolution' ...resorting to harassment complaints is a practice that fills a void." In other words, interpersonal conflicts that do not constitute harassment are being forced into a procedure akin to a "court case": once the process takes over, mediation between the individuals

becomes almost impossible. On the other hand, teachers who experience difficulty in resolving conflict with a colleague have no other official recourse.

One of the avenues that Ms. Moisan suggested is that the College develop a "conflict resolution policy". Rather than following the model of a "court", with official hearings and other confrontational situations, this policy should lead to mediation between the parties in a conflict. The goal should be to foster dialogue, leading the actors to identify the real source of the conflict,

which is often obscured by personality differences or unspoken grievances.

The College has started the work of drafting this new policy, and the Harassment Awareness Committee is working closely with Human Resources and the Administration on this issue.

If you have comments or suggestions, please contact [Julien Charest](#) (faculty representative on the Harassment Awareness Committee) or the [JACFA office](#).

## SOCIAL REPORT



L.to R: Penny Stewart, Jim Leeke, Diane Radu, Gennaro Rispoli, Bess Miller

### **Faculty Christmas Luncheon**

The JACFA Executive would like to thank all members and retirees who attended the annual Christmas luncheon at Château Vaudreuil to wish our newly departed colleagues a happy retirement. Hope to see you all at next year's event!

### **Open Mic Night**

Come one, come all to the **3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Open Mic Night on Tuesday, February 26, 2013** at 5:30 p.m. at the Ceilidh (in the Centennial Centre right here on campus). It will be a rockin' event as you and your colleagues showcase your talent in the form of poetry, comedy, music, song and dance etc. If you would like to perform, please contact Richard Masters ([richard.masters@johnabbott.qc.ca](mailto:richard.masters@johnabbott.qc.ca)) to register by February 18, 2013.



## EXPLAINING HIRING COMMITTEES:

Whether teachers are part-time or full-time, permanent or not, the beginnings of their career have one thing in common: a hiring committee. However, hiring committees are not all the same. Their composition and the way they work are defined by our collective agreement.

### DAY DIVISION

Hiring committees for teachers in the Day-Division are defined by article 4-4.00 of the collective agreement. When a job posting in the Day-Division needs to be filled, unless someone has a hiring priority due to our job security clause (5-4.00), it is the duty of the hiring committee to recommend the hiring of applicants. The membership of the committee consists of:

- three teachers chosen by the teachers in the department
- two persons chosen by the College.

Once the posting period is over, the College must provide the committee with all the applications, along with proof of qualification, and relevant work experience. The committee then makes its recommendations to the College, and must also inform the department. These recommendations should be based mainly on **professional competence** and **pedagogical aptitude**. In the case where more than one candidate will be hired, the committee should also establish the hiring order of the recommended candidates.

If the recommendation to hire a candidate is unanimous, then the College must hire him/her. If the committee is unable to reach a unanimous decision, but reaches a majority recommendation,

then it should provide the College with the reasons for its majority decision. Unless the committee fails to fulfill its duties, the College cannot hire a teacher in the Day-Division unless he or she has received a majority recommendation from the hiring committee (once again, unless the provisions for hiring priority in article 5-4.00 allow for it). Should the committee fail to fulfill its duties, the College can proceed to hire teachers without a recommendation.

### CONTINUING EDUCATION

Hiring committees for teachers in Continuing Education work differently, and are defined by article 8-7.00 of the collective agreement. It is stated that unless a teacher has a hiring priority, then the hiring of new teachers will be made according to a procedure determined by the College. The College must also invite one teacher from the day-division discipline, where applicable, to participate in the hiring process.

It is clear that teachers from the department have less input in the hiring decision of ContEd teachers, or even sometimes no input at all, when no one from the department responds to the invitation. However, it is possible to negotiate a local agreement that could define the hiring procedure, as well as the membership of the hiring committee. In light of the arbitration decision at the Cégep de l'Outaouais concerning the hiring priority of ContEd teachers in the Day-Division (see the article in the previous issue), it might be preferable for some departments to set up a hiring procedure for ContEd that is closer to the one we have in the Day-Division.

## JACFA ACTION E-MAIL LIST

On a regular basis, JACFA receives e-mails from FNEEQ, the CSN, its Montreal Central Council, and other like-minded organizations inviting our members to take part in political actions or to support different causes. These range from workers rights in Mexico, campaigns against violence towards women to support for victims of legal abuse.

JACFA forwards these types of political or international messages **ONLY** to faculty members who have signed up with the JACFA Action E-Mail List. To sign up, send us an [email](#) with "JOIN JACFA ACTION" in the subject line.

## THE PROGRAM APPROACH AT JOHN ABBOTT

As we have recently updated our local agreement on the program approach (voted on last year at our JACFA general assembly last May but not yet signed by the administration) and are currently in discussions over how volet 2 (department and program) release time is allocated, it seems to be an opportune time to provide some historical context on it.

Historically at John Abbott, we weren't much concerned with program coordination. Until the 1993 cegep reforms, academic programs were tightly controlled by the Ministry of Education. Each discipline had a provincial coordination committee that controlled what courses were taught, what their objectives, content and evaluations should be, etc. This was all published in a document that we called just the *Cahier*... In general, we applied it less strictly than in many other (especially French-language) colleges, and there was not much done at the "program" level.

At John Abbott the academic sector was organized into two "divisions" – "Science and Related Technologies" and "Social Science and Related Technologies", one for each of the two associate deans. The chairs of departments in each division met monthly, but since they included technical and general education departments, there was little discussion about "program" matters in any kind of a formal sense; divisions were a means of the administration communicating with departments.

[One anecdote may illustrate this. In 1995 the newly formed *Commission*

*d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial* (CEEC) ordered that the Social Science program be evaluated at all colleges. A meeting was organized by the CEEC to describe to representatives from the English colleges how the evaluation process should be done, and they explained that the evaluation should be based on whether the objectives of the program were being achieved. The chair of one of John Abbott's Social Science departments raised his hand and asked the question that was on most, if not all of our minds: "*What are these program objectives that you're talking about? At John Abbott we don't have any!*" Of course they did exist, buried deep in a previously ignored section of the *Cahier*, and the CEEC rep patiently drew everyone's attention to them.]

When the cegep reforms were implemented after 1993, many of the old centralized provincial structures were eliminated -- no more provincial discipline committees with release time, they were replaced by consultative committees for each program. The *Cahier* was also thrown out, replaced by more general "competencies" instead of detailed directives for each course. Departments/disciplines in each local program were given the opportunity/forced to work together more closely, elaborating competency-based programs, exit profiles and comprehensive assessments, and working on program assessments. The old divisional structure simply didn't work any more in this context, so in 1997 we created our first program committee structure at John Abbott.

Our first "program approach" was handicapped by two problems. First, a lack of release time for doing program work (everyone on the program committees was either a volunteer or chairs who felt that they didn't have any additional time to devote to program work). Second, the two associate deans were too thinly spread out to be able to provide consistent administrative input to all of their program committees. This was particularly evident in program evaluations, where groups of mostly volunteer teachers worked hard to prepare evaluation reports with little or no administrative input. Then, they would be told "you can't say that" or new previously undiscussed "administration" recommendations would be added by the Academic Dean after the completed report went to the Board of Governors. At about the same time, the administration pulled the Academic Dean and Associate Deans off of all of Academic Council committees.

In 2000, the way that teaching resources were to be allocated was reorganized in our collective agreement into the three "volets": volet 1 was regular teaching, volet 2 included not only departmental but also program release (for coordination, participation, and development/evaluation/implementation). At John Abbott, we were allocated seven FTEs for volet 2 (in addition to the 1/19 ratio that generates department chair release) for all 19 programs across the college. Program committees were also put into the collective

## THE PROGRAM APPROACH AT JOHN ABBOTT (CONT'D)

agreement, but with only "advisory" powers as compared to departments.

At John Abbott we decided that to get the program approach working, especially in the pre-university programs, we needed to allocate significant resources to it. We came up with our current program committee structure to solve the two problems mentioned above. First of all, we agreed to make the associate deans chairs of the large pre-university program committees (and members of all the other ones) in order to ensure that they were actively engaged in the program committees and their work. It was also at this time that the college added a third associate dean. The associate deans were the "*responsables de programmes*" in the administration, and we wanted them to fulfill this role and articulate the administration's positions at the committee. Note that a program committee is in the final analysis only advisory, and the "program chair" doesn't actually have much inherent power to do anything other than chair meetings.

Second, we gave some volet 2 release time to all of the pre-university discipline or department reps on the program committees so that they had time and it was clearly identified part of their job to do this work (and if it's the department chair who attends, there's still more resources overall). This allowed the committees to meet regularly, initially every two weeks, now monthly) to do their work.

We took a different approach with the professional programs, as there's much more overlap between "department" and "program" there.

Their program committees tend to meet much less frequently (1-2 times per semester and sometimes

even less than that). We agreed with the administration that it made sense for a teacher in the main teaching discipline (usually the department chair or a co-chair) to be the program committee coordinator, and required a "double majority" of all representatives and of the representatives of the main teaching discipline for all decisions. The four General Education disciplines were made members of all program committees, reflecting their significant role in them.

[Liberal Arts was always an exception -- it initially developed as a "bottom-up" program developed by its teachers, originally as a profile in Social Science, eventually as its own program. The teachers asked to keep their structure where all teachers of their courses were on the program committee, and we agreed with the administration to this request. Now Arts and Science is planning to follow the same model. We'll see how that goes, as the two programs developed quite differently; it will be interesting to see if they can sustain participation without release over time...].

In the early years, these program committees worked hard as the programs were revised to become competency-based. Exit profiles, comprehensive assessments, and program assessments were part of their work, as well as the more general tasks of making programs coherent and encouraging disciplines to work together, especially where competencies are shared.

More recently, the administration appears to be questioning the program approach. Last year, the number of meetings in the large pre-university programs was cut in half, and at CRT last April, our employers proposed to significantly cut release time for participation in program activities.

The JACFA Executive is currently working with the academic administration to try to come up with a new approach to how *volet 2* (department and program release) is allocated. One possible change is that they may be combined (not including the development, revision and evaluation of programs, which shifts and varies from year to year). This may, in turn, lead to changes in the proposed program approach agreement. This needs to be completed before we start the allocation process in April, and we will be consulting faculty when we have a clear sense of where we are going.

**3rd Annual  
Open Mic Night!**

**Tuesday,  
February 26**

**To register your act,  
please contact Richard  
Masters no later than  
Monday, February 18**

[richard.masters@johnabbott.qc.ca](mailto:richard.masters@johnabbott.qc.ca)

## HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT

### Can You Hold Please?



The inventory of door locks in teaching spaces (classrooms, labs, etc.) in the non renovated areas of the college has been completed. The results show that approximately 1/3 of teaching spaces have functioning locks, 1/3 have no locks at all and 1/3 have the capability for locks to easily be made operational. The goal of this inventory is to prepare for making all teaching spaces lockable in the event of a hostile intruder incident. The College is also considering installing some sort of master lock system, which might also reduce the cost of cutting keys, but this has not advanced yet. Unfortunately the college is presently without a Facilities director and plans to add locks to teaching spaces are on hold until a new director is in place.

### To Consult or Not Consult?



At the Health and Safety committee meeting this month it came to the members' attention that the college is working on a College Health and Safety policy. The members of this committee have not been consulted nor were they even aware that such a policy was being developed.

It is a requirement for the college to have such a policy to remain in the *Mutuelles de Prévention* for CSST coverage. There are legalities to be followed, but wouldn't it be proactive to also include a health philosophy for the employees of the college, and perhaps reduce the number of CSST cases by involving everyone and having a positive healthful outlook?

### Do Crisis Management and Health and Safety go Together?



The Crisis Manager of the College, Mr. Dennis Waide (also Director of Student Services) has not yet attended a Health and Safety meeting. JACFA is not sure of his role as crisis manager. The committee has asked that Mr. Waide be invited to attend a Health and Safety meeting this semester. Any questions you may have for Mr. Waide may be forwarded to the faculty representative on this committee, [Ute Beffert](#).

### Increased Security Patrols

The college now has two more security guards patrolling the campus. There will be one guard at all times in the office at the Herzberg entrance and one or two patrolling the campus. It also appears that eventually the security office will move from Herzberg to the Casgrain ramp entrance.

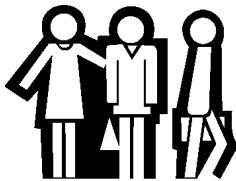
If you have any questions or concerns about Health and Safety on campus, please contact [Ute Beffert](#), the faculty representative on the Health and Safety Committee.

## JACFA Valentine's Day Soup of Love For Faculty!

Thursday, February 14,  
from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
Faculty Lounge (H-101)







**JOHN ABBOTT COLLEGE  
FACULTY ASSOCIATION**

Penfield -105

Phone: 514-457-6610, ext. 5506

Fax: 514-457-9799

E-mail: [jacfa@johnabbott.qc.ca](mailto:jacfa@johnabbott.qc.ca)

**We're on the web:**

[www.johnabbott.qc.ca/jacfa](http://www.johnabbott.qc.ca/jacfa)

**DATES TO REMEMBER**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14**

*Faculty Soup of Love!*

11:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

In the Faculty Lounge (H-101)

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20**

*JACFA General Assembly*

5:30 p.m. in HS-606

(Health Sciences Building)

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26**

*3rd Annual Open Mic Night*

5:30 p.m. at the Ceileidh



**PLEASE WELCOME MARK MCGUIRE AS A  
NEW MEMBER OF THE JACFA EXECUTIVE**

Thanks to everyone who participated in the December 19th General Assembly, election and celebratory lunch. We were thrilled to see so many participate in these important discussions, democratic election processes and occasions to celebrate our retired colleagues. I wish to congratulate new JACFA president Ute Beffert and thank outgoing president Faye Trecartin for her decade of service. Thanks to Doug Brown also for submitting his candidature for the executive and making an election possible.

I could not be happier about election to the JACFA Executive. Since joining the JAC faculty in 2005 I have sought the necessary skills and experiences to prepare for this role. Alex, Daniel, Julien, Louise, Richard, Stephen and Ute have extended a warm welcome and are helping me get up to speed on how things work and what needs doing. It's challenging and meaningful work.

In addition to this new role with JACFA, I teach courses on documentary film and politics, Japanese culture and campus sustainability in HPR. I try to persuade students their General Education classes are important for developing critical thinking skills to become well-rounded human beings and engaged citizens. JACFA's mandate as I understand it is securing the best work/life conditions for all faculty and creating a stimulating learning environment for all students. When we examine what sustains us in the workplace - a healthy, safe, supportive, inclusive and stimulating environment, robust pay and benefits and a pension plan that enables us to thrive after retirement- we can see that the work of the union is deeply connected to fundamental sustainability concerns.

I look forward to working with you all in the new year!

Mark Patrick McGuire