

May 8th, 2012

A message from our President

Greetings All:

I wanted to update you on several items that have happened since my February newsletter. Most importantly, we have received Arbitrator Hall's decision on the Online Modality Arbitration. He awarded us an increase for the Marked Assignment Fee from \$193.35 to 250.00. This is retroactive to the start of the Online Modality. The Marked Assignment Fee is based on total assignments for the course and only marked assignments are paid, no change there. We were well represented by Leslie Burke-O'Flynn at FPSE. Mary Kruger was also heavily involved in developing the strategy and digging out appropriate information. My role was to determine what we wanted for a settlement and to support Leslie and Mary in their areas. A copy of the award is on our website www.truolfa.ca under Resources.

The Professional Development fund (PD) Committee members have been very busy. The last fiscal year (April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2012) disbursed \$57,600 to our members compared to \$48,000 from the University. Our annual allotment (1.5% of wages) is \$52,000 for 2012. We are regularly overspending the allotment and a policy change has been implemented. The PD Committee has established the limit of a PD event to \$2,000 and has eliminated the two-year overlap. This is in effect for all applications approved after April 1st, 2012. The application form is on our website www.truolfa.ca under PD.

Last year, we were invited to participate in a Strategic Planning meeting that was voluntary. The employer made it clear that there would be no payment for travel or for our time. The meeting was 3 hours long; we should be compensated for both travel and time. In the future, I encourage you to ignore any voluntary meetings! We must be paid for our time and if our views are invited then the employer must pay. Please be very clear if you are asked to volunteer your time, simply decline.

The Collective Agreement (April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2012) has now been signed by all parties. A copy is on our website under Resources. We are considering what key items that should be included in the next set of negotiations. During the May OLFM workshop in Kamloops, on Sunday morning (8:00 am to 10:00 am) we will be holding a meeting to ***discuss your ideas***. We know that a raise is at the top of most agendas but there may be other opportunities to improve job security language, make gains in governance and other areas. Your input is vital and much appreciated!

We are exploring ways to streamline the administration of our Collective Agreement. Two areas are being discussed. The first is the payment of the Technology Fee. The annual payment applies to all members with earnings in the previous year including any retirees. The task for payroll is to allocate the Technology Fee to all members, rehire the retiree or terminated employee, pay the fee then remove the retiree or terminated employee from payroll. An alternative is to pay the fee on each pay through the year thereby eliminating the convoluted annual payment. The second is payment for exam marking. The process of invoicing would be eliminated by paying for marking based on entering the exam mark just like the assignment fee.

The catch is to pay based on historical time billed by OLFMs for each course. A review of the historical time is yet to be completed and reviewed. Ron Lakes, Mary Kruger and I are working on the streamlining committee with Sarah Langlois. We have asked to share in the savings of clerical time.

I have mentioned the need to improve student completion rates. I believe we need better tools to help us. In the interim, I have developed Excel files to help me track student progress. While it is a good start, it is far from perfect. I plan to demonstrate what I developed at the Workshop and to gauge member support for better tools. Your comments and participation are welcome!

If you have any questions or comments please pick up the phone and call.

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