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Your Workload by Abe Kelledjian, Union Co-Chair of WMG

WMG: UNDER ATTACK

In the last Educator issue (November 2012), readers were advised that College management unilaterally changed the terms of reference for the Workload Monitoring Group (WMG). This joint union-management committee is tasked with the responsibility of reviewing all SWFs for all full time professors to ensure a correct and equitable workload. WMG also resolves workload complaints.

Our collective agreement states that every college must have a WMG.

Imposed Changes to Joint Committees

The Joint Health and Safety Committee is another joint union-management committee that has experienced a similar unilateral change in terms of reference. Please note that a joint committee means that both sides have equal power and rights—or at least should have.

The first imposed changes for WMG involved an 80% reduction in complementary hours for the Union representatives—Darryl Bedford, Jennifer Boswell, and myself—from 5 complementary hours a week to discharge our duties to 1 hour a week. Also imposed was a new meeting schedule, which reduced the number of meetings per semester from 7, every two weeks, to only 2 per semester.

The reduction in hours resulted in some SWFs from three schools for the Fall 2012 term never being reviewed; the rest of the schools that were reviewed and flagged as problematic have not been dealt with yet.

Since then, further changes have taken place. The Secretary of WMG, a neutral third-party support staff member, has been removed from the committee and her responsibilities have now been reallocated to an administrative assistant from Labour Relations in Human Resources. All SWFs have been removed from the neutral

location of K building to Human Resources in F building.

These changes represent a profound alteration of the WMG protocol that has stood for over 26 years—since 1986.

Why has management imposed these changes? We believe that the effectiveness and work of WMG is being attacked. The committee, when not impeded, helped resolve workload complaints, noted errors on the SWFs, exposed inequitable assignments, corrected changes in evaluation factors, and so on.

The SWF is your term-to-term work contract with Fanshawe College. The SWF is your only protection against workload inequities and manipulation.

Changing Evaluation Factors

Do you feel like you're working less? No? Then why does your SWF hour total keep going down? Good question! The Committee has recently noticed a trend: evaluation factors on the SWFs are being changed (lowered) without faculty consultation or consideration.

Part of the WMG review includes checking each SWF individually to ensure that evaluation factors match the Method of Evaluation set in the Course Information Sheets.

Your course, which may have always been 100% EP, all of a sudden changes to 80% EP and 20% RA. The impact of this? You have lost 8 hours of evaluation time for that course for the term (3 hours of teaching a week, 14 week term, 45 students). You've got two of these courses? You've lost over 16 hours of evaluation time.

Most teachers agree that they enjoy developing curriculum, and they love teaching and helping students—but evaluation is often the



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WMG Under Attack, continued

(Continued from page 1)

most disliked part of the job. Lowered evaluation factors make it look like you're actually spending less time marking and giving feedback.

Your Responsibility

Don't just assume that everything on the SWF is rolled over from one SWF to the next. Be vigilant when you review your workload and your preps (New, Established, Repeat), and your evaluation factors. Make sure that they accurately represent the way you deliver and evaluate your courses.

Faculty must exercise personal responsibility when it comes to their individual workloads. Take

your SWF away for a thorough review. It is your right under Article 11 to do so, but remember to return it within three (3) days; otherwise, it's deemed as being signed and accepted.

If you do not agree with something that is on your SWF, have a discussion with your Chair. If it cannot be resolved at the Chair level, then bring it to the attention of your steward or a member of the WMG.

The process of SWF signing is made very clear in Article 11.02. If you have not read Article 11 in its entirety, I encourage you to do so. ☞

EVALUATION FACTORS: How do they work? Why do they matter?

Course/ Subject Ident- ification	A s T a c t i v i t y f a c t o r	L a b o r a t o r y f a c t o r	Preparation				Evaluation Feedback				C o u n s e l l i n g f a c t o r	A d d i t i o n a l f a c t o r
			T y p e	F a c t o r	A t t e n d a n c e f a c t o r	A t t e n d a n c e f a c t o r	T y p e	F a c t o r	A t t e n d a n c e f a c t o r			
Reference	Collective Agreement - Article 11.01											
	B&C	D	D	D	D	D	E	E	E	E	F	D,F+
SAMPLECRS	3.0	1	EB	0.60	1.8		35	IP	0.0092	1.0		
Wkly Total	3.0				1.8					1.0		

In the example above, the sample 3 hour course gives the professor 1 hour of evaluation for **all** students, per week. How is this calculation arrived at? Take number of teaching contact hours TCH (3), multiply it by number of students (35), multiply it by the evaluation factor (for IP, this is .0092 of an hour, or 33 seconds) then you arrive at the hours attributed for evaluation per week. Over 14 weeks, this SWF is saying you spend only **24 minutes evaluating each student over the entire term.**

If this is the type of evaluation you do, great! If your manager has asked to change your evaluation factors, or if they have been changed without discussion, you may wish to note the following.

Reference	Collective Agreement - Article 11.01										
	B&C	D	D	D	D	D	E	E	E	E	F, D, F+G
SAMPLECRS	3.0	1	EB	0.60	1.8	35	EP	0.0300	3.2		
Wkly Total	3.0				1.8				3.2		

A traditional essay/project EP course of 3 hours involving the same class size as the first example (35 students) gives you 5.4 minutes of evaluation time per student, per week (3 hours x 35 students x .03 of an hour EP evaluation factor = 3.15 hours per week, rounded to 3.2 hours). Over 14 weeks, the SWF notes that for this course you spend **75.6 minutes per student for evaluation, or 1 hour 16 minutes in total over the term.**

An evaluation factor of EP gives you three times more evaluation time than you get with IP. The RA factor, Routine Assisted, lies in the middle (approximately 38 minutes per student, per term). ☞

President's Message by Darryl Bedford

The God Professor, now available online

If you have ever walked up Yonge Street in Toronto you have probably heard him. Just past Yonge-Dundas Square on the west side of the street. . . simply the usual hustle and bustle of T.O. and then all of the sudden his voice slices through everything... "BELIEVE!"

Right now, some of the e-learning enthusiasts and the Massively Open Online Course (MOOC) evangelists don't sound all that different. Their message might be coming from an "online street corner" and not a real street corner, but they sure seem to be shouting "Believe!" to whomever will listen.

Should we believe the hype?

For those of you who are regular readers of this space, you will know that online and hybrid learning do not faze me. A qualified professor with sufficient time and resources teaching a class of a reasonable size can create an effective learning environment. Successful teaching and learning are all about the quality of the student-faculty interaction, whether that be in person or online.

On January 16, 2013, I attended the "Digital Boon or Digital Doom?" discussion panel on e-learning co-sponsored by Western's Faculty of Information and Media Studies, moderated by Ira Basen.

On a side note, during this session an administrator referred to "legacy faculty," which is the second time I've heard this term. 'Legacy faculty' is an expression underpinned by the belief that post-secondary educational institutions are filled with lumbering dinosaurs somehow unable to adapt. On several occasions I've come up against this notion that faculty brains just switch off once we have been teaching full-time for a few years. It's utterly offensive nonsense.

But I digress. Back to the discussion panel: the questions were thought provoking. Thousands upon thousands of students have registered in MOOCs. Some students are applying themselves, while others may just be there for the ride. Nobody is quite sure what the MOOC business model is or should be.

What if these MOOCs draw students away from the traditional institutions of learning? 'So what?' argued one member of the panel. If one professor is doing a better job teaching a subject online than another one is, perhaps the less competent professor should lose students to the other, 'better' professor.

And so the term was coined on the spot: The God Professor.

He or she walks on water. The God Professor is the source of all vital content, effectively delivered; students hang on every word.

But is the God Professor a good thing for education?

Free market forces would send students flocking to his/her courses. Diversity of thought and opinion would suffer. Should thousands of information technology professionals be learning about artificial intelligence from a single source? I say no, as the science of artificial intelligence thrives on unusual and quirky approaches.

Faculty who aren't as entertaining as the God Professor would lose out. The jobs and livelihoods of the good but not god-like professors may be lost. Our college and local economy may suffer if we aren't home to a sufficient number of chosen few God Professors.

Interestingly, in his inaugural speech last month President Obama noted, in the portion of his message referring to the need to stand together in America, "No single person can train all the math and science teachers we'll need to equip our children for the future." Even Barack speaks against the God Professor! I'm being a little facetious, of course.

But most online learning proponents think otherwise—see Bill Gates' support of the Khan Academy, an online deliverer of math tutorials (<http://www.khanacademy.org/talks-and-interviews/v/bill-gates-talks-about-the-khan-academy-at-aspen-ideas-festival-2010>). Perhaps Salman Khan is the first God Professor—the Khan Academy logo is topped by "236,394,226 lessons



delivered." The number increases by the minute. Correctly, in my view, Gates qualifies his remarks saying that the students who access online resources must be "really, really motivated to learn."

Motivated learners will always find a way. What about all the others?

One panelist was very blunt about the MOOC trend and remarked "This may or may not be good for students, but it's bad for faculty." Multiple contributors emphasized that "faculty do need to wake up and pay attention to this."

Here is your wake up call.

I have a message to all professors who want to provide a quality publicly-funded education to their students. It's for all of you, not just the God Professors.

Together, working as a union of educators with common interests, we can build a future where faculty have academic freedom. Where faculty, not bean counters, choose the most effective delivery mode. Where students have the choice between online, hybrid, and face-to-face delivery. Where students have access, either in person or online, to faculty who are given sufficient time and support, with controlled class sizes, to create a quality learning environment.

It's just me, your friendly local union president, walking over to the corner of D, E, and F blocks with a message. Can we have a system that is good for students *and* good for faculty? To that I say...

"BELIEVE!"

Darryl

In the News by Paul Evans

Conservative leader Tim Hudak vows to bring in 'right to work' legislation and change public pensions in Ontario

Tim Hudak has big plans and, if elected, his promised policies would affect all members of Local 110. He vows he would bring so-called "right to work" laws to union workplaces in Ontario. With this law, contributions to unions would become voluntary for union members.

Hudak states that "we actually need to modernize our labour laws to get them out of the 1940s and 1950s to 2012 and beyond." He goes on to say "it's a debate we need to have in this country because I'm worried about the jobs we're losing and I'm worried about a decline to Rust Belt status." Hudak argues that "right to work" laws would bring more jobs to Ontario and increase workers' wages.

Mediamatters.org, a U.S. non-profit media watchdog, has published careful research that debunks the message Hudak and others would have Canadians believe about such legislation bringing more jobs and higher wages (<http://mediamatters.org/research/2012/12/12/myths-and-facts-about-right-to-work-laws/191810>).

These laws represent a huge departure from traditional Canadian labour law. Since 1946, union workplaces have been regulated by the Rand formula. This formula allows workers not to join unions in union workplaces; however, these workers are still required to pay union dues because they are benefitting from the collective bargaining process, which secures improved benefits and wages. The Rand formula is a classic Canadian compromise and has worked well since 1946. We have had relative labour peace since that time.

Reaction to Hudak's proposed changes has been quite critical. Carleton business professor Ian Lee says that

"Right to work is too loaded and incendiary, and if a majority Conservative government passes such a law, it would produce huge anger and blowback." Furthermore, Lee states that "It is a bridge too far to take away the Rand formula. If Hudak was elected and it went through, the union movement would pull all the stops and declare war against the government."

David Doorey, an associate professor

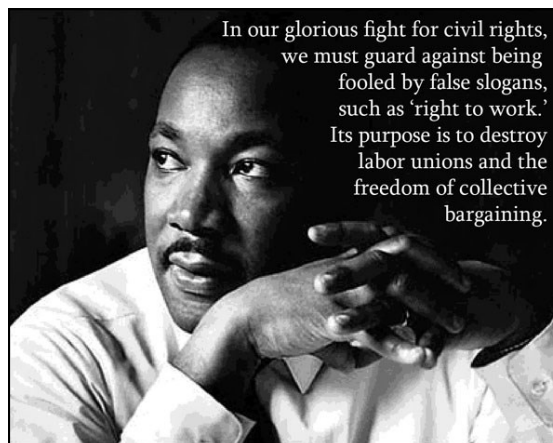


Image retrieved from www.rifuture.org

at York University, says in his blog "the purpose or result of a right to work law is to render meaningless any collective bargaining rights relating to union dues collection. And that...could result in a challenge under Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms."

Finally, Justin Paulson, an assistant professor at Carleton University says "encouraging workers to opt out of paying dues substantially weakens any union's ability to negotiate on behalf of its members. The result is almost always weaker unions and lower wages. This is uncontroversial; the lowest wages are in right to work states."

Darryl Bedford, president of Local 110 says that "the unions would be providing services for people not paying dues: free riders." This would create a toxic atmosphere in the workplace

"pitting member against member, worker against worker." Bedford points out that there is no proof that right to work policies do anything to improve the economy. Instead, it is a "race to the bottom" for workers.

As Martin Luther King succinctly stated, and President Barack Obama has recently repeated, "Right to work is the right to work for less."

In addition to 'right to work', Hudak wants to change what he calls 'gold-plated' public pensions. He would raise the retirement factor (age plus number of full-time years worked) from 85 to 90. Hudak argues that most public employees can retire now in their mid-50s and we can't afford it. Bedford counters that the average retirement age for college employees is around 61.

Also, Hudak wants new public employees to be in a defined contribution plan rather than a defined benefit plan. Bedford argues that a defined contribution plan is just a "glorified RRSP." The problem is that as the defined benefit plan gets fewer members "the old plan stands to destabilize. It is harder to manage risk". Bedford, a CAAT pension plan trustee, clarifies that "our pension plan is in good shape and adequately funded."

These changes proposed by Hudak would affect all Fanshawe employees: faculty, support staff and administrators.

Given Hudak's radical proposals the next provincial election will be crucial for public sector workers. Polls show that Hudak's message is not resonating with voters. A recent Toronto Star poll had the N.D.P. at 34 %, the Conservatives at 31% and the Liberals at 26%. We are in for an interesting ride! ☹

John Conley, JHSC Worker Co-Chair

Health and Safety Inspection Protocol: Entering Your Workspace

Health and Safety inspections of our workplace are necessary to ensure our safety here at Fanshawe College. These inspections are mandated by the OHSA (Occupation Health and Safety Act, a.k.a., the Act).

Recently the Fanshawe College Main Campus Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) drafted an inspection protocol. Local 109 and Local 110 members should be aware of certain aspects of this protocol, particularly the parts that pertain to us in our classrooms, labs and office spaces.

There have been instances of workers being annoyed with JHSC worker members on inspections in classrooms and labs. In addition, sometimes people feel intimidated during office inspections. Awareness of this protocol should help alleviate these concerns.

The workplace inspections, essentially spot check walk-throughs, are scheduled; however, college management has determined that notifying affected workers of a

scheduled inspection in advance is impractical. Therefore, these inspections may appear to occur randomly throughout the workday hours and calendar days.

When a JHSC worker member enters your classroom he or she will immediately identify themselves at the door, often by silently flashing a HEALTH AND SAFETY INSPECTION sign affixed to the back of their clipboard.

They will then enter the classroom or lab and take a quick look around the room to determine if there are any unsafe and reportable conditions. In lab inspections, equipment may be inspected and WHMIS MSDS sheets checked for expiry dates.

The intent here is to be as non-intrusive as possible and not to disturb you, the students, or negatively impact teaching, learning or work processes in any way. If you would like to avoid being disturbed by inspections during testing or student presentations, for example, please place a note on the class/lab door and you will not be disturbed by an inspection at

that time.

During office inspections, remember that the JHSC Worker Members are not the 'safety police'; in fact, quite the contrary! We are there to ensure your safety and not to reprimand or place blame.

During inspections, if you have **any** safety concerns about your workplace, it would be appropriate to inform the worker member inspector(s) at that time.

We have a dedicated team of four altruistic Local 109 and Local 110 JHSC worker members to help ensure your safety at work. They are working for you.

Let's all work together to reach and maintain our objective of a safe and healthy workplace! ☙

London JHSC Worker Members:

John Conley (Local 110)
John Lidzbarski (Local 110)
Carmen Pinnell (Local 109)
Drew Elwood (Local 109)



You don't know Jack about student mental health! Eric Windeler to speak on Monday, March 25 at 12 noon, Forwell Hall

THE
jackproject

thejackproject.org unleashthenoise.com rideforjack.com

Your faculty union and the Fanshawe Student Union are delighted to co-sponsor a roundtable discussion with Eric Windeler, founder of the **Jack Project**. Eric will share his tragic experience of losing his son, Jack, to suicide while attending his first year at Queen's University.

Eric will speak about the importance of identifying students who may be

suffering with mental health issues and who are at risk.

We as faculty often see the early signs of depression. What does it look like in the classroom? In student assignments? In their responsibilities?

What do we do about it?

Local 110 encourages all professors, counsellors and librarians, and any member of the Fanshawe community to

attend this informative, emotional and engaging event on **Monday, March 25 at 12 noon in Forwell Hall.** ☙





Book Review by Mike Boisvert

Finnish Lessons: What can the world learn from educational change in Finland? By Pasi Sahlberg

Finns, it seems, have a knack for divergent thinking. From 3000 BC forward, Finland is

credited with a wide range of inventions and innovations. Notable Finnish achievements include the inventions of ice skates (with blades made of animal bones), saunas, and the first mobile phone call using GSM (global system for mobile communications). In 2009 Finnish game developer Rovio Entertainment treated the world to a compelling new video game plot: launching indignant avifauna at hapless hogs. One billion downloads later, *Angry Birds* continues to prove that chucking birds at pigs can be surprisingly fun.

Recently, the world's attention has been focused on another Finnish innovation—its education system. Interest has been accruing over the past decade as the country's students have outperformed most other nations on international tests in literacy, math and science. In *Finnish Lessons: What can the world learn from educational change in Finland?* (2011), Pasi Sahlberg provides a detailed account of his country's primary and secondary school educational reforms and places them in the broader context of Finland's cultural, political, and economic history. Compared to other nations, Finland has sought a different path to educational success. Indeed, it seems the Finns have looked at the dominant approaches to education used in much of the developed world... and done the opposite.

Structure & Success

Social, economic and political turmoil defined Finland over much of the first half of the 20th century. A civil war, fought in 1918 was followed two decades later by World War II. Beginning in the 1950s, the largely agrarian country began its transformation to an industrialized nation. The education sector was to be a central component in this transformation.

Sahlberg explains that in the early postwar period, Finland's education system reflected the inequality that afflicted the country more broadly, and educational policy reflected the zeitgeist of the time, which was "everyone cannot learn everything." Thus, by age 12, students were shuffled into one of two separate tracks, one leading to more academic postsecondary studies, the other to technical training in vocational schools. Switching tracks was all but impossible. During the 1960s, cracks were developing in the system. Skyrocketing enrollments,

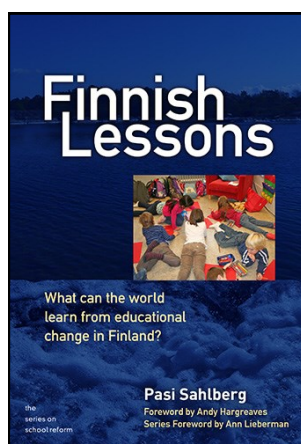
electives. Postsecondary higher education is available for up to 4 or 5 years of study at a university or polytechnic, with postgraduate studies an option. This flexible system allows students to move between paths.

For just over a decade, Finnish students have consistently outperformed most other nations on international tests. The OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), regularly used in such comparisons, tests reading, science and mathematical literacy among 15 year olds. In the four PISA tests since 2000, Finland has most often finished first or second relative to over 60 other OECD countries, and has never finished worse than fourth. (To compare, Canada consistently ranks in the top 10 on the OECD measures; within Canada, Alberta consistently outperforms all other provinces and territories).

The Finnish Paradox

What is most striking about Finland's student performance is how that performance has apparently been achieved. Finland's approach to education rejects much of the conventional wisdom used by many systems around the world. Indeed, Sahlberg frames his discussion of the country's educational gains as a series of apparent paradoxes. Two overriding paradoxes exist in the Finnish system: first, that excellence in education be defined in terms of equity, not in terms of performance on standardized tests; and second, that more can be done with less.

The major policy priority is that all children have an equal opportunity to participate in education. In support of the priority, education is free in Finland, including postsecondary. Student retention and graduation rates are excellent by international standards, and far better than those in North American jurisdictions. A major goal is to develop equity among geographic regions and socioeconomic levels. Available data suggest this goal is being realized. Compared to other OECD countries, Finland has the lowest variance between schools on the PISA subject tests



increasing parental demands for better educational opportunities, and an emerging concern for social justice and equality were key factors in the development of a new approach to education.

The overhaul of Finland's education system started in the early 1970s. The practice of streaming students into separate tracks was abandoned. In its current form, children at age 7 begin *peruskoulu*, a compulsory 9-year long basic educational program. Schooling beyond this point is not compulsory. Following *peruskoulu*, students may enroll in upper secondary school or upper vocational school for 3 years. A major emphasis in postsecondary education is on the development and application of customized lesson plans, influenced by a student's interests and future goals. Roughly a third of all subjects taken are

(7%; OECD mean, 42%). In other words, test results are consistent across schools in Finland. One practical implication of this is that most parents in Finland don't need to figure out where the 'good' schools are—they're all about the same.

The "less is more" paradox emerges in three areas: teaching, testing, and spending. Finnish teachers spend much less time teaching than do their counterparts in other countries. At the primary and secondary school levels, Finnish teachers teach an average of 700 and 600 hours per year. In both cases, this is 100 fewer hours than OECD averages. In the U.S., teachers teach more than 1000 hours/year, while Canadian teachers teach an average of about 900 hours annually. What do Finnish teachers do when not teaching? According to Sahlberg, they spend time engaged in school improvement, curriculum development, health and wellness initiatives directed at students, and peer discussions on pedagogy.

Less is more also defines Finland's approach to testing students. Finland rejects the use of standardized testing, common in much of the rest of the world. Sahlberg notes that teachers and administrators fear that use of high-stakes standardized tests will narrow curriculum and lead to teachers teaching to the test. The major exception to this policy on high-stakes testing is the National Matriculation Exam, which students must take after completing secondary school to be eligible to apply to postsecondary institutions.

Although Finnish students outperform their peers in the OECD, expenditures on education are not exceptional by OECD standards. Finland ranks about the middle of the pack of 65 OECD countries on public expenditures on primary and secondary education per student. (In contrast, they rank 5th in the OECD on public expenditures on postsecondary education per student). Over the past 5 years, Finland's public expenditure on education as a proportion of GDP has been at or near the OECD average.

The 'T' Word

In weighing the various factors that contribute to Finland's educational success, Sahlberg asserts that "one factor

trumps all others: the daily contributions of excellent teachers" (p. 70). The centerpiece of Finland's educational system overhaul has been its approach to teacher education and professional autonomy. The minimum requirement for employment as a teacher is completion of a research-based Master's degree. Admission to teacher education is highly competitive—only 1 in 10 applicants are accepted—and teaching is regularly rated as one of the most admired professions.



"But the true Finnish difference is that teachers in Finland may exercise their professional knowledge and judgment both widely and freely in their schools. They control curriculum, student assessment, school improvement, and community involvement. Much as teachers around the world enter the profession with a mission to build community and transmit culture, Finnish teachers, in contrast to their peers in so many countries, have the latitude and power to follow through."

Across the system, teachers are given autonomy to plan curriculum, develop assessment methods and teach. Included in their formal work time, each teacher is attributed 2 hours each week to plan and develop work with colleagues and reflect on pedagogy. Unusual by international standards, teachers are not formally evaluated. Principals, themselves teachers, informally help teachers to recognize strengths and areas for improvement. Embedded in the culture of Finnish education, Sahlberg notes, is the belief that teachers are responsible, well-trained professionals who are trusted to do their best.

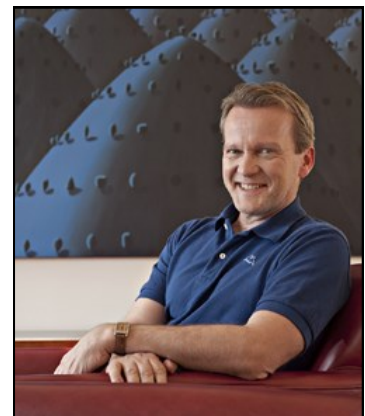
Conclusion

The Finnish system has much to recommend it: free universal education at

primary, secondary and postsecondary levels, superlative student achievement in international comparisons, consistency in success across schools, modest costs, and a culture of trust and respect in which teachers have autonomy in determining curriculum and assessment methods. Sahlberg, however, cautions against trying to franchise out the Finnish model to other jurisdictions. The success of the system likely depends on more than the elements that comprise it. Some countries, for example, have fewer teaching hours annually but experience lackluster student success; other high performing countries, like Korea, prescribe many more hours in the classroom than does Finland. Finnish educational policy exists as one part of a broader public policy strategy that reflects and is embedded in a social and cultural context.

Finland's education system diverges sharply from the many nations in pursuit of the goals of competition, standardization and accountability. The principles that underlie the Finnish approach, however, are not completely new innovations. Rather, they have roots that stretch back in time, to Wilhelm von Humboldt's emphasis on equity, accessibility, and universality in education during the Enlightenment, and to the pragmatism of John Dewey, who argued for the importance of linking theory with practice and who insisted that school should be a vehicle for social reform.

Sahlberg poses the question "What can the world learn from educational change in Finland?" The answer may be to take inspiration from old ideals and to develop new paths to realize them. ☪



Pasi Sahlberg, Director General of the Center for International Mobility and Cooperation (CIMO) in Helsinki, Finland

Report Summary by Jennifer Boswell: Part One of Two

An Analysis of Counselling Services in Ontario Colleges

by Jim Lees, Confederation College and Peter Dietsche, OISE/U of T

In October 2012, Jim Lees of Confederation College, and Peter Dietsche of OISE/UofT released a 129-page report entitled *An Analysis of Counselling Services in Ontario Colleges*. Their comprehensive report integrates information gathered through questionnaires and interviews involving all 24 colleges in Ontario. One hundred and seventy-two counsellors responded to questionnaires and 120 counsellors participated in focus groups. Colleges were categorized by size (small, medium, large according to student enrolment) with Fanshawe among the 8 large colleges. Lees and Dietsche's research also included a questionnaire for managers of counselling services; however, this article/overview focuses on the counsellor data.

OVERVIEW OF THE ONTARIO COLLEGE SYSTEM

The role of colleges in Ontario has changed over time. A profound change has occurred recently around the understanding of colleges' obligations towards their students. Colleges now have a strong obligation to support, retain, and foster the success of all students who enter.

Lees and Dietsche observe that there is also an understanding that colleges are responsible for promoting the mental health and well-being of students. There is a growing belief that Ontario college students have a right to counselling services in the same way that students with disabilities have the legal right to accommodations. Our open access colleges have generated an ever more diverse student body, and students with personal and mental health counselling needs are increasingly represented. If these students are attending college, the college must have the supports in place to ensure their success.

Increased college obligations, together with a diverse student body and rising enrollment all have considerable impact

on counsellors and counselling departments at Ontario colleges.

SYSTEM GROWTH

Between 2007-2012, full-time student enrollment across Ontario's community colleges increased by 26%. During the same period, the number of counsellors increased by 4.6%. At large colleges, enrollment grew by 29.3%, while the counsellor complement grew by 12%. Midsized colleges, which saw the most full time student growth (36.4%), showed a negative counsellor complement: counsellors decreased by 6.9% (p. 102).

Of the 13 colleges that could supply counseling service statistics, almost 18% of the students visited a counsellor. At the 6 large colleges, data show 540 visits per counselor in the academic year 2010/2011 (p. 103).

Full time enrollment has grown much faster than the counsellor complement that services students. Counsellor-to-student ratios have also increased in large colleges by 13.2% between 2007-2011, with the ratio going from 1:1392 to 1:1576. For mid-sized colleges, this ratio greatly increased by 39.7% (p. 102).

The volume of student demand has led some colleges to try to limit the number of visits a student can have with a counsellor, but these limits are used more as guidelines rather than strict rules (p. 48)

Multiple campuses that have resulted from system growth have also had an impact on counselling services. Satellite campuses unfortunately do not receive the same levels of service due to lower student numbers and distance, among other reasons. Overall, satellite campuses receive less attention with respect to student services overall in favour of emphasis on academic programming (p. 98).

WHAT DO COUNSELLORS DO, EXACTLY?

College counsellors' main professional functions include academic advisement, career exploration and personal counselling (which includes advising,

coaching, counseling and psychotherapy). Across large colleges, counsellors spend approximately 22% of their time on academic advisement, 17% on career exploration, and 61% of their time engaged in personal counselling (p. 22).

Counsellors are also involved in a remarkably broad range of outreach activities. Across the participants in Lees and Dietsche's study, 577 such activities were identified across four categories: student workshops, guest speaking in classrooms, training student employees and leaders, and training staff and faculty.

CHALLENGES:

CHANGING STUDENT BODY

More complex mental health and other issues

In October 2010 the first ever Mental Health and Addictions in Post-Secondary Education Summit took place. Dr. Bruce Ferguson, Director of Community Health Systems Resource Group, Hospital for Sick Children, noted that "one in four students in PSE [post secondary education] will experience a serious mental health or addiction issue while in their program of study" (as cited in Lees & Dietsche, p. 12).

There are alarming rates of mental health and addiction issues, say counsellors. When asked about the impact of student mental health issues on their day-to-day work, 88% of counsellors said they had "profound" or "very much" impact (p. 40).

Students with complex issues who in the past may not have tried to access post secondary education are now coming to college. Some are encouraged to attend as part of their treatment plans. Colleges are seen as an accessible system, and lowered stigma around many issues and increased self-identification have increased these student numbers. Colleges and counsellors in particular bear a responsibility to help such students succeed.

The respondents observed that students in general seem more vulnerable

than in the past. They suffer higher levels of anxiety and stress, and the economic downturn has had a huge impact.

Increased diversity

In addition to more vulnerable students, and more with increasingly complex mental health issues, counsellors are dealing with a considerable increase in student diversity. There are cultural and linguistic complexities. There are issues relating to age, LGBTQ, poverty, substance abuse and autism. There are numbers of new Canadians, First Nations, international, second career and WSIB referred students.

Fifty-four per cent of counsellors said that student diversity has had a “profound impact on the way I do my job” or “very much of an impact” (p. 38).

Teaching faculty will have noticed increased behavioral or other problems in their classrooms as a result of a more diverse student population that results from increased access. Counsellors are increasingly involved in supporting faculty and administration in planning appropriate interventions for students whose behavior is problematic (p. 122).

“International student” is a term with several subgroups; this population is not homogeneous by any means. One subgroup involves students from other countries who have witnessed terrible violence and trauma, and experienced conditions certainly beyond most Canadian experience. In addition, cultural and linguistic differences compel counsellors to take more time with these students.

More students with increased needs coupled with fewer counsellors have resulted in counsellors now doing fewer outreach activities. In addition, counsellors’ work has shifted to more personal counselling over academic and career counselling. This shift has been facilitated also by the increase in the number of ‘advisors’ in the college system, a topic discussed in Part Two of this series.

Aboriginal counselling

Eight Aboriginal counsellors from 6 colleges answered the questionnaire. These counsellors note that they deal with

a higher quantity of health concerns amongst the students they serve. They also deal with more issues related to fatal accidents and suicides.

One important difference between their job and counsellors working with the general student population is that Aboriginal counsellors spend quite a lot of time working with sponsoring agencies and bands. While there is often considerable collaboration between Aboriginal counsellors and those who service the general population, First Nations counsellors see themselves as having a significantly different role from the other counsellors at their college.

Six work-related challenges were cited by Aboriginal counsellors, two of which Lees and Dietsche collated as “working within an educational institution that doesn’t understand the connection between culture and retention issues,” and “the ongoing energy that is required to educate and advocate within a system that is often insensitive to the needs of Aboriginal peoples” (p. 42).

COUNSELLING DELIVERY MODES

Delivery modes is an interesting part of this report, particularly as e-learning is such an overwhelming topic now for all educators, and as economic pressures make online delivery of services ever more attractive to administrators, managers and politicians.

Virtually all counsellors meet with students in person and individually (99.3%) “always,” or “most often.” Sometimes they engage in telephone counseling (52%), sometimes group counseling (25%), and some deliver e-counselling asynchronously (24%). The majority have never taken part of synchronous e-counselling (84%) or video -counselling (96%) (p. 35).

Another question asked was about the importance of using web technologies to advertise department services: 55% said that web-presence was “definitely” important and 22% said it was “quite important” (p. 44).

Lees and Dietsche note that “the adoption of technological approaches or tools by counsellors in Ontario colleges

has been minimal at best” (p. 35). The report authors repeat this finding later in the report, noting that the vast majority of work is done individually, one-on-one, “with very little uptake of e-counselling (synchronous/asynchronous), video counselling, web-based approaches, texting and the use of social media” (p. 95).

This wording is somewhat alarming, perhaps presaging a push into technological delivery of a human service that by its nature is intensely personal, and dependent on real connection. To that point, Lees and Dietsche found that more than two-thirds of counselling managers believe that online technology could “definitely” improve the delivery of counselling services (p. 95).

In a separate email communication, Lees confirmed that counselling via distance technologies is a divisive topic, with some saying it can’t be done and some arguing it can be effective. Certainly, everyone involved in counselling holds individual views on the matter.

In the report, it’s a little unclear whether online technology is being recommended as a delivery mode, or to improve access to services, and/or to advertise services to students. It is very important to distinguish how online technology is being promoted, for what purpose, and clarify how it would be, or should be utilized by counsellors and counselling departments.

CONCLUSION

An Analysis of Counselling Services in Ontario Colleges makes it clear that there is “ample evidence to conclude that the support students need to be successful has increased” (p. 116). However, the data unequivocally reveals that counsellors across Ontario’s college system are trying to meet escalating student needs with fewer resources. ☪

Summary of report by Jennifer Boswell

Part Two, in the next Educator: The report’s findings on the changing nature of counselling practice

By Darryl Bedford

New Decision Regarding Timeliness of Bullying Grievances

Can you file a grievance related to bullying after you retire? It turns out that under certain circumstances, **yes you can.**

An important decision has been issued by an arbitration panel chaired by Jasbir Parmar. The decision *Fanshawe College and OPSEU (Blaxall)* can be found here: <http://opseu110.ca/awards/Blaxall%2012-11-09%20Timeliness.pdf>

At the hearing, the panel heard evidence from a faculty member who had filed grievances relating to bullying and harassment by management and co-workers. The faculty member argued that management had failed to address concerns in the workplace.

She retired June 30, 2012, the optimal date for a faculty member to retire given the terms of our Collective Agreement and the CAAT Pension Plan. The panel also heard that her decision to retire was somewhat involuntary. Parmar writes, "She stated that in mid to late June, she realized she couldn't continue in this environment, and made 'a very last minute decision' to resign."

Following her retirement, the member filed a grievance on October

15, 2012. The employer filed a motion that the grievance should be dismissed as untimely. Usually individual grievances do need to be filed within 20 days of an incident that is in violation of the Collective Agreement.

However, cases of bullying and harassment are different. They often deal with patterns of behaviour that occur over time. The panel considered that the parties had agreed in Article 4 of the collective agreement (No Discrimination, Bullying, Psychological Harassment) that the usual timelines specified in Article 32 may not apply depending on the circumstances.

Factors to consider

Which circumstances need to be considered? There are 7 factors:

1. The nature of the grievance;
2. Whether the delay occurred in initially launching the grievances or at some later stage;
3. Whether the Grievor was responsible for the delay;
4. The reasons for the delay;
5. The length of the delay;
6. Whether the responding party could reasonably have assumed that the grievance or complaint had been abandoned; and

7. Whether there has been any prejudice to the responding party as a result of the delay.

After considering the above criteria, the panel ruled that the member's grievance was in fact timely and could be heard on its merits. Subsequent to this decision, the matter was resolved to the member's satisfaction.

What lessons can members take from this?

Allegations of bullying and harassment are significant and need to be taken seriously. Even if there is a delay in filing a grievance, immediate action to address the situation should be taken.

Members should raise bullying and harassment concerns as soon as possible. It is wise to speak to a union representative right away to understand your rights under Article 4.

You have the right to a safe workplace and the employer has an obligation to make reasonable provisions to ensure employees are free from bullying and psychological harassment.

We are here if you require help. ☎



**Workplace Violence
Prevention & Interdiction**

Analysis by Darryl Bedford

Fanshawe College takes OPSEU to Court to Prevent the Hiring of 2 Full-Time Nursing Faculty

Arbitrator's decision found to be 'incomprehensible'

In a strange turn of events, Fanshawe College management and Local 110 find themselves back at "square one" or perhaps "square two" when it comes to staffing in the School of Nursing.

First, some background. When a sessional faculty member teaches for 12 months out of a 24 month period, not necessarily consecutively, they "rollover" into a full-time professor position. This is guaranteed in Article 2 to prevent use of sessional faculty to avoid hiring full-time.

Two sessional faculty in Nursing had reached the 12-in-24 threshold, with one individual filing a grievance in November 2007 and the other in July 2008. Local 110 had also filed union grievances citing violations of Article 2 Staffing in the Collective Agreement.

An arbitration panel chaired by Howard Brown convened to decide all of these staffing issues and several days of hearings took place over a period of years.

The two individual cases ultimately hinged on the meaning of the words "days worked." A sessional faculty member must have 15 days to have completed a month which then counts towards the 12 months in 24. The College argued that "days worked" referred only to the days the faculty member was timetabled. The Union argued that "days worked" referred to days under contract and cited case law that supported this interpretation.

If the College's interpretation of

"days worked" was to be accepted, management could reorganize every faculty timetable to have just two days of contact per week. For example, a sessional professor could teach two 7-hour days for a total of 14 teaching contact hours. Similar arrangements could be made throughout the college. Since the sessional professors would never reach 15 days in a month, this could allow a college to convert nearly every full-time faculty position to a sessional contract! Our entire staffing model could be undermined.

Success! Two Full-Time Hires

After a long wait, the arbitration board issued an award on July 9, 2012. The two individuals could rejoice as they were successful. They were to be given full-time positions and their probationary period was to be considered completed.

But Wait...

Unfortunately, the celebration was short lived. Fanshawe management advised the two faculty that they would not hire them. Fanshawe also applied for judicial review, claiming that the arbitration award was "unintelligible."

Fanshawe Management Appeals Decision

Judicial review is a process where one party appeals to Ontario court citing a factual error or an error in law made by the arbitrator. It is also an expensive process when one considers the legal fees involved.

The case was presented at the Osgoode courthouse in Toronto on Thursday January 24, 2013. Lawyers Tim Hannigan and David Wright represented us and I was there as an

observer for the Local. Our counsel conceded that the arbitrator's decision was "not a model of clarity" but that it was reasonable and should be upheld.

By 2:30 in the afternoon, there was a decision.

Management "Wins"

The court stated that their standard was reasonableness. They said that there may be a line of reasoning which would support the reasonableness of the arbitration award but in this case the arbitrator's reasons for the decision were "incomprehensible."

The original arbitration decision that ordered Fanshawe College to hire these two sessional employees as full-time was therefore "quashed." The grievances are to be sent to a newly constituted board of arbitration.

Although it is a major setback, it is not a total loss. The court did not say that the union's interpretation of "days worked" was incorrect. It is disappointing because it wasn't that we didn't present the facts or make sound arguments. If only our arguments were adequately documented in the arbitrator's decision, the outcome would have been very different.

How Many Thousands of Taxpayer Dollars Wasted?

End result: we have to start over. Will the employer spend thousands more taxpayer dollars on unnecessary legal fees? All to prevent two nurses from being hired full-time into jobs they are already doing? ☹

Darryl

Local 109 Officers Resign

We are All Affected:

Labour Relations Improvements Needed at Fanshawe College

On February 14, Local 109 Acting President Marg Rae sent an e-mail to all support staff members with the disturbing news that all of the local officers had resigned.

She describes their ordeal: "The local had very high hopes for Wil [Sorrell] as Local President, as he came in with a different viewpoint and new ideas. He did not have the years of history of failed attempts at improving labour relations as was the case in the past."

Marg continues, "It is my opinion that until a [systemic] change happens with labour relations, it will not matter who is in the leadership position, nothing will change."

She describes the role of the Local: "Your union representatives are here for the sole purpose to represent your rights and advocate on your behalf. We have attempted to make a difference, but to effect change it requires both parties to come to the table and be willing to give and we do not have a willing partner at this time. Until the college sees the local representatives as equal partners and engages us as part of the solution, instead [of] treating us as part of the problem, labour relations will continue to decline."

Marg's words ring true for Local 110's experience of labour relations at Fanshawe College.

The quality of labour relations impacts every employee at this college.

Workplace safety was weakened when management imposed terms of reference and restricted release time for worker members on the Joint Health and Safety Committee.

The ability of the Workload Monitoring Group to ensure that all faculty work assignments are equitable and accurate was severely restricted when the College unilaterally slashed the number of WMG meetings and the amount of release time for Group faculty members by 80%.

Employees are negatively impacted when not consulted when decisions are made about their work, course assignments, evaluation, timetabling, and the work environment.

Arbitrary changes to student grades and a hard-line approach to timetabling have been reported by many faculty.

Employees are not valued when genuine opportunities to participate in decision making are limited. Employees are also not valued when sessional and partial load faculty are hired semester after

semester with little prospect of full-time work.

We see the negative impact on our members as a result of Morneau Shepell/Human Resources' style of handling return to work and accommodation requests. Sick days and workplace accommodations are being interfered with, at significant cost to employees' peace of mind and possibly their health.

The College takes a hard-line approach to individual grievances. Violations of the collective agreement and legislation have occurred, and management has made decisions that can only result in grievances.

President Rundle has routinely refused to meet with Local 110 representatives, sending the message that your

priorities are not his concern.

The Board of Governors has refused to meet with representatives of the two locals, sending the message that your priorities are not their concern.

The 2010 and 2012 employee satisfaction survey results indicate employees do not feel valued. In addition, the "Our Values" survey confirmed a mismatch between the values held by you and those of the college.

Bad labour relations affect us all. ☹

Management can increase their efforts to--

- ◆ Work with both locals to improve labour relations
- ◆ Honour the terms of the collective agreement
- ◆ Treat people with respect
- ◆ Value employees' loyalty and hard work
- ◆ Improve communication and responsiveness to employee input
- ◆ Collaborate with the locals to resolve problems early, without resorting to costly arbitration
- ◆ Develop practices that are transparent and accountable to employees.

We only become what we are by the radical and deep-seated refusal of that which others have made of us.
~Jean-Paul Sartre