



The U of T Budget and the Economic Crisis

THE ECONOMIC CRISIS is being used to justify cutbacks in many parts of the University of Toronto.

But what effect is the economic crisis actually having on the university budget? Are cutbacks really needed? This article addresses these questions using figures from the 'Long Range Budget Guidelines' prepared by the Office of the Vice-President and Provost earlier this year.

An important point is that the wages, benefits and pensions of USW members at the U of T are protected by a collective agreement that is in force until July 2011. We ratified that agreement three days before Lehman Brothers went bankrupt, sparking the global financial crisis. The university administration must now honour this agreement despite supposed budgetary pressures.

To assess how the economic crisis may affect the U of T budget, one must consider its main sources of revenue. In 2008-2009, the U of T received \$635.2 million in government grants, which accounted for 45% of the total operating budget. If the governments of Ontario and Canada were to balance their budgets by reducing grants to universities, the U of T's finances would suffer. But governments have instead responded to the economic crisis by spending more through

stimulus packages. Even before the most recent federal and Ontario budgets, the U of T administration expected government grants to increase to \$646.6 million in 2009-10. In fact, governments are also providing a further \$550 million in each of 2009-10 and 2010-11 for deferred maintenance and repairs at Ontario universities.

According to the latest federal economic progress report, "The University of Toronto will receive more than \$75 million" for the Mississauga Laboratory Centre, Scarborough Instructional Lab Project, and Centre for the Canadian Mining Industry. These funds are over and above the revenues budgeted by the administration. To some extent, they will free up money that otherwise would have come from the operating budget.

The U of T's other major source of revenue is fees paid by students. In 2008-

"The U of T budget is not nearly as grim as is often implied. There is no financial basis for layoffs or other workplace restraints."

09, the university collected \$612.7 million in tuition and other student fees, which accounted for 43% of the operating budget. University enrollment typically rises during economic downturns as people who cannot find jobs choose to upgrade their skills and credentials through study. The U of T administration is also hiking tuition fees.

More students paying higher fees will bolster U of T revenues. The administration projects that tuition and other student fees will rise to \$664.3 million in 2009-2010.

The only source of university revenue negatively impacted by the economic crisis is investment income. In 2008-2009, the endowment fund and other investment income contributed \$71.0 million to the U of T operating budget, only 5% of the total. Due to massive investment losses in the endowment fund and lower rates of interest on cash balances, the administration projects just \$19.1 million from these sources

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Allison Dubarry re-elected Local 1998 President

Allison Dubarry has been re-elected President of Steelworkers Local 1998. She received 591 votes to defeat challenger Allan Revich who received 269 votes. All other positions on the Executive were acclaimed. (Please see 'Reports of the Election Committee' on page 3 in this issue.)

Allison, who will begin her third term as President, assumed office on May 12, 2009 when she and members of the new Executive were sworn in by Staff Representative Bryan Adamczyk.

Allison said that she is looking forward to the next three years. With a new executive team in place, she is confident that the union is united when it comes to dealing with the university. However, she admitted that,

"The next three years will be challenging. The job evaluation exercise will be completed and we will be negotiating with the university on its implementation."

"Job security is another priority for us. Members are already feeling the impact of the economic recession with lay-offs occurring in several departments," she added.

Her comments were echoed by Vice-President Paul Tsang. A former President of the Graduate Students Union (GSU), Paul is well-versed in dealing with the university on various issues — a factor that led him to be elected as the new Co-Chair of the Grievance Committee.

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on the move

Local news for members of Steelworkers Local 1998

Meet the newest members of your Job Evaluation Committee

Meet the newest members of Local 1998's Job Evaluation Committee.

From left to right: **Colleen Burke** (CERIS), **Irene Kao** (Ctr. for the Study of Religion), **Pat McClellan** (Facilities and Services), and **Sandra Grant** (Dept. of Economics).

Steelworkers Local 1998, which represents administrative staff at UofT, celebrated its 10th anniversary on December 11, 2008. The guest of honour at the celebration was Steelworkers International President, Leo W. Gerard, who addressed a standing-room only crowd.

In his speech, President Gerard praised Local 1998's role in diversifying and broadening the base of the Steelworkers union. With a membership that is 70% female, Local 1998's 6,200 members makes it the largest local in Canada. President Gerard also highlighted the pioneering role that the Local played shaping the direction of the union by moving into the education sector.

In her speech, Local 1998 President Allison Dubarry praised the many pioneers and activists who signed Steelworkers union cards and worked tirelessly to convince the majority of their colleagues to do so. This was in spite of a failed certification vote with another union ten years earlier. She noted the many benefits enjoyed by staff since joining the Steelworkers and pointed to the recent collective agreement as an example. The contract provides, among other things, a \$2,000 per year child care allowance.

Allison Dubarry, Local 1998 President, with commemorative "10 Years of Steel" plaque.

Other guests at the anniversary celebration included International Vice-President Carol Landry, Canadian National Director Ken Neumann, District 6 Director Wayne Fraser, Toronto Area Council co-ordinator Stuart Dean, Local 1998 Staff Representative Bryan Adamczyk, former International President Lynn Williams and former District 6 Director Harry Hynes.

— P.C. Choo, Admissions & Awards

Lisa Newman is one of our newest Stewards at Victoria U.

Grace Santos also joins us as another new Steward at Victoria U.

United Steelworkers International President receives honorary degree...

On June 11th, the International President of the United Steelworkers, Leo Gerard, was awarded an honorary doctor of laws degree from the University of Guelph in recognition of his contributions to social justice.

In a moving convocation speech, Dr. Gerard challenged the graduating students to engage in the social change needed in our society. Whether they are interested in social justice, environment or labour issues, Leo encouraged the next generation of leaders to actively work on behalf of the average citizen to make this a better world.

In a reception following the convocation, National Director of Canada, Ken Neumann and former International President Lynn Williams paid tribute to Gerard's many years of fighting for working families, the labour movement, the Steelworkers and many social justice issues.

...And the Larry Sefton Award...

United Steelworkers International President Leo Gerard has been named the 2009 recipient of the *Larry Sefton Award* for contributions to industrial relations. The award ceremony was held at the University of Toronto Multi-Faith Centre on March 12, 2009.

The award was presented to Leo by Prof. Laurel Sefton MacDowell, a history professor at the University of Toronto at Mississauga. Prof. MacDowell is also the daughter of the late Larry Sefton, a former Director of District 6 of the Steelworkers Union. The award is named after Larry Sefton who earned the respect and admiration of those who worked with him. Woodsworth College and the Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources host the annual Sefton Memorial Lecture in his memory.

Describing Leo as "a great Canadian who stands out as a leader in today's rather beleaguered world", Prof. MacDowell said that Leo

"...is greatly admired in the labour movement and would have been admired by Larry Sefton, for his values, his creative ideas and his dedication to serving his members and other workers in this toughest of economic situations."

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Steeldrum is published by USW Local 1998 (UofT) and is printed by Hamilton Web Printing. Steeldrum is a member of USPA and CALM.

All inquiries and submissions are encouraged. Submissions by email are preferred.

Non-email submissions should be on a 3.5" disk or CD accompanied by a hard copy.

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who
we
are





PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

the GLOBAL ECONOMIC crisis has been the biggest newsmaker in the past year and has touched most of us.

Working people didn't cause the crisis. We didn't set the policies that made it possible for those with the biggest slice of the pie to get an even larger slice, but that hasn't stopped some from placing the blame on unions. Leo Gerard, president of the Steelworkers sums it up nicely,

"When we deregulated the financial sector, that was the economic equivalent of leaving three-year olds alone in a candy store. You know what they're going to do. They're going to gorge themselves. And when you go and get them, they're going to throw up on your shoes. I'm just tired of having my shoes thrown up on by Wall Street."

Job Layoffs:

Some employers have used the crisis as a cover for cuts and layoffs that would have been difficult to justify in better times, including making a cut in one year that covers several years instead of phasing it in. The impact of a cut like this can have a brutal effect on those who are let go and also those who remain. One has to ask why the choice is made to make a cut like this.

Contracting Out:

The recent eHealth scandal has also made the public aware of how often consultants are used and the exorbitant rates charged, including very generous severance packages and bonus. This has resulted in an interesting debate about how public funds are used or misused, patronage and oversight. Warren (Smokey) Thomas, president of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) commented that,

"At a time when health care services are being cut across Ontario and thousands of workers face layoffs because of huge operating deficits at hospitals, it boggles

the mind that this provincial agency is spending millions of public dollars on consultants who are paid to read the New York Times and who bill the taxpayer for their personal consumption of pop and donuts... This sort of wild spending would be hard to defend in good economic times, but to see this sort of waste during an economic crisis is scandalous, especially with the cutbacks we're witnessing in the health care sector."

We can be certain that during the next round of bargaining in the civil service (OPSEU) the government will tell workers that there aren't the funds for them to have a fair wage increase. It's hard to believe that no one in the large civil service was able to do any of the work that was contracted out to consultants at rates between \$2,700 and \$3,000 per day. Contracting out and the use of consultants are two issues our local has been raising with the university for some time and will continue to do so.

Erin Weir has an interesting article in this issue on the financial situation at U of T which makes for a fascinating and informative read about the financial crisis and puts terms like 'deficit' and 'crisis' into perspective.

Job Postings:

In our last agreement we won a clause that provides us with the rationale regarding the hiring of external candidates. On a number of the jobs that are awarded to external candidates, the stated reason for hiring an external candidate is that there weren't any internal candidates. Lack of qualifications by internal candidates is often another reason provided. If you've applied for a job that you believe you're qualified for and do not receive either an interview or the job, please contact your local steward who will look in to this for you. Stewards have been working with members on issues like this, including redeployment pool members who are either not receiving interviews or jobs that they are qualified to do. You can find a list of all of our

stewards on our website.

Work Environment:

Bullying / harassment and workload are two issues our stewards often deal with and we have been working with members to try and resolve some of these troubling issues. There's a very good website at www.unbf.ca/towardarespectfulworkplace/index.html that deals with bullying in the workplace. They identify the barriers that are often present when dealing with bullying/harassment:

"Often, the target of the bullying may feel too intimidated to speak up. Bystanders who see what is going on may feel that it isn't their problem or their business, and so hold back from getting

"Some employers have used the crisis as a cover for cuts and layoffs that would have been difficult to justify in better times."

— Allison Dubarry, President

involved. Supervisors or managers may feel inadequately prepared to address such issues. They may downplay them, treating them as 'personality conflicts' which it is up to the affected employees to resolve on their own."

In the last collective agreement we won language regarding bullying and harassment and your stewards are here to help you with any issues. We spend so much time at work that it's vitally important that the environment is respectful. The Steelworker guide to preventing harassment can be found at:

www.usw.ca/UserFiles/File/WOMEN/AntiHarass%20ENG%20guide07.pdf.

help@usw1998.ca

We're here to answer questions and help. Stewards are located on all campuses and are your first contact if you have a question or issue (www.usw1998.ca/stewards.htm). You can also send an email to help@usw1998.ca and your query will be forwarded to your closest steward. If you're interested in becoming a steward, please let me know.

— Allison Dubarry, President

Allison Dubarry re-elected Local 1998 President ...continued from page 1

"I am delighted that Allison was re-elected President," Paul said. "Members came out in big numbers to support her and all the work the union is doing on job evaluation and pay equity. Her vast experience and steady leadership will be major assets that will lead us through these challenging times."

"I encourage everyone to stay informed - join the e-mail listserv, read the SteelDrum newsletter, and get out to the USW lunch-

time information sessions. The strength of our union is through an active and informed membership. Talk to your union steward about any concerns you might have about your workplace, and get involved in the issues and decision-making by coming out to the monthly membership meetings," Paul added.

— Lori May, OISE / UT



FROM May 25–29, 2009 I was among a dozen new Local 1998 stewards who participated in a week long training course entitled “Stewards in Action.”

Not only did this course help us better understand our role as stewards and how to represent our members to the best of our abilities, but it also provided us with an excellent opportunity to interact with some of our brothers and sisters in other USW Locals who are also new stewards.

Together, we learned various skills such as filling out a grievance forms, dealing with harassment and abuse in the workplace, tactics for dealing with management, and how to counteract anti-union sentiment. We also learned about the history and structure of our union, the grievance procedure, how to conduct incident investigations, the difference between a complaint and a grievance, and the duty of fair representation.

Stewards maintain an important link between the union and the workforce. Many workers are so busy juggling family responsibilities that they

“Please do not hesitate to contact the steward closest to your area if you have questions or concerns. Your steward is there to listen to you, and we will represent your best interests.”

may not have time to attend the monthly local meetings and take a more participatory role in the life of the union. Stewards not only help to keep these workers informed about the issues the local is facing, but also serve as the face of the union. For many people, their steward may be the only personal contact they have with the union. Hence, it is essential that stewards take their responsibilities seriously. The way we deal with a worker’s concerns could make the difference between whether or not that worker supports the union. The course therefore stressed the importance of stewards being respectful and understanding of our members at all times by utilizing effective communication and listening skills in order to build upon and maintain union activism.

grievance process if necessary or via less formal avenues geared towards settling worker’s complaints. Unionized workers do not have to face management alone. If your manager wants to meet with you, and you have reason to believe the meeting could result in disciplinary action against you, you have the right to have a steward present.

We stewards are committed to defending the contract and ensuring that it is being respected and followed by management. To do that, we need to make sure our members are aware of their rights and options when faced with a given situation.

Talk to your steward, we are there to help!

— **Kristy Bard, Anthropology**

Diane Robertson wins UTM Staff Service Award

DIANNE ROBERTSON, Undergraduate Advisor for the Department of English and Drama and the Department of Philosophy at the University of Toronto at Mississauga, has won the prestigious 2008 Staff Service Award.

The Staff Service Award acknowledges “service exceeding job parameters and efforts that have led to improvements at the university.” The award ceremony was held at the Faculty Club on November 19, 2008. Winners were selected by a committee that reviewed nomination packages submitted by colleagues and students.

Dianne began her career as Secretary for English at Erindale College almost ten years ago. Although she has also worked for several other humanities departments over the years, she has always been with English and Drama.

According to Professor Leslie Thomson, Chair of English and Drama, she and Dianne have worked together all that time and decided that

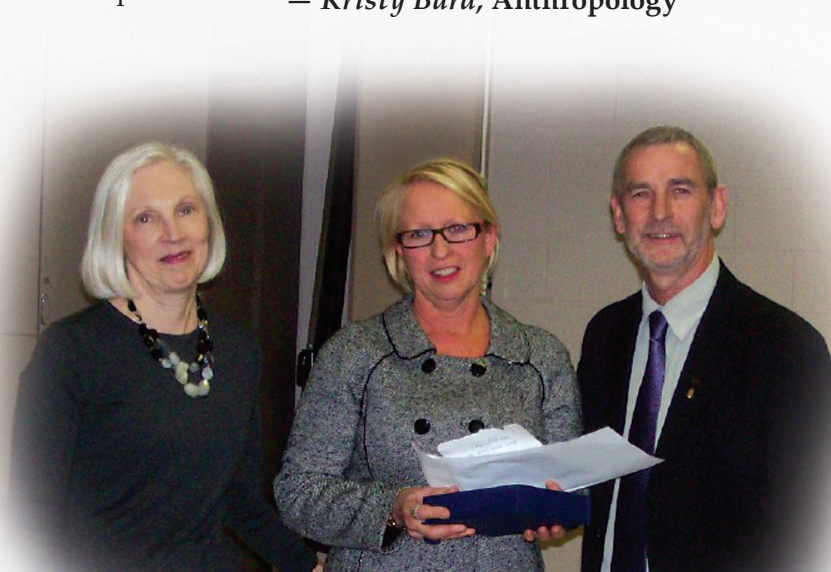
“acknowledgement of her extraordinary service could wait no longer. The criteria for the award include resourcefulness, high standards, responsiveness to students, dedication, and a high level of integrity, so I knew that gathering enthusiastic support for my nomination of Dianne would be easy, and the many letters I received proved me right. The key point emphasized by everyone who wrote is that Dianne regularly, and consistently, indeed habitually, goes above and beyond what anyone should or would expect her to do —

most notably for students, but equally for the rest of us in the Department and for UTM in general.”

“But it is the students who most directly and immediately benefit from her desire to do everything she can to make their time at UTM the very best it can be. Dianne goes far beyond her job description, and the result is students who know she cares about each one of them,” said Prof. Thomson who presented Dianne with the award. *“It must also be said that Dianne also has the loudest and happiest laugh in the north building. The department and UTM would definitely be a lesser, and quieter, place without her.”*

In her acceptance speech, Dianne thanked all those who made her success possible, especially her colleagues and the students who nominated her for the award. She also credited the Steelworkers for making a difference in the lives of administrative staff.

The event, which was emceed by Vice-President and Principal Ian Orchard, also recognized four employees who received a pin to mark their 10-year service to the university: Michelle Alexander



Dianne Robertson (centre) receiving her award from Department Chair Prof. Leslie Thomson and UTM Principal, Prof. Ian Orchard.

(Hazel McCallion Academic Learning Centre), Charlotta Nordfeld (Hazel McCallion Academic Learning Centre), Rajni Lala (mathematics and computational services) and Myron Kulykowsky (facilities management and planning).

In addition, Orchard acknowledged the recipients of the 2007-08 *U of T Stepping UP Recognition Award*, which recognizes staff who furthered one of the academic plan’s major goals: enhancing the student experience; interdisciplinary activity; linking academic programs to research experiences; outreach; and equity and diversity. Staff members who received the award are: Cesar Mejia, Johnny Chung, Wendy Norman (registrar’s office); Diane Ross, Kris Horvath (facilities management and planning); Andrew Bellerby, Jack Krist, Louise Vanderwees, Maureen McLean, Rachel Tenant (physical education, athletics and recreation); and Aubrey Iwaniw (geography).

— **Art Birkenbergs & P.C. Choo**

Canadian Universities and the Economic Crisis

- 1. **Government Grants:** Cutbacks to balance budgets or stimulus spending?
- 2. **Tuition Fees:** Will the administration lower fees? How many people will go to university?
- 3. **Investment Income:** Significantly reduced, but limited impact on operating budgets

“The economy will recover and government revenues will grow again. This budget, released in extraordinary circumstances, signals the government’s continued commitment to universities and to research and innovation. I look forward to future investments in operating support and student aid that will be as generous as this year’s outstanding support for infrastructure and research.”

— *Professor David Naylor, University of Toronto President, March 27 Press Release*

2009 Federal Budget Measures for Universities

- **\$1,400 million** between 2009-10 and 2010-11 for deferred maintenance and repairs
- **\$70 million** between 2009-10 and 2010-11 for federal granting councils
- **\$600 million** for the Canada Innovation Foundation

2009 Ontario Budget Measures for Universities

- **\$550 million** between 2009-10 and 2010-11 for deferred maintenance and repairs
- **\$300 million** to match Canada Innovation Foundation funding
- **\$35 million** of capital funding for medical schools

University of Toronto Budget Summary (\$ millions)

	2008-09	2009-10	2011-12
Provincial Operating Grant	\$ 583.5	\$ 594.5	\$ 599.5
Other Government Grants	\$ 51.7	\$ 52.1	\$ 51.6
Tuition Fees	\$ 506.9	\$ 546.8	\$ 631.8
Other Student Fees	\$ 105.8	\$ 117.5	\$ 122.4
Endowment Revenue	\$ 45.9	\$ 6.1	\$ 46.4
Other Investment Income	\$ 25.1	\$ 13.0	\$ 25.0
All Other Revenue	\$ 96.6	\$ 107.5	\$ 111.1
Total Revenue	\$1,415.5	\$1,437.6	\$1,587.8
Expenditure	\$1,404.3	\$1,426.4	\$1,567.6
Possible “Deficit” Spending		\$ 45.0	
Maximum Expenditure	\$1,404.3	\$1,471.4	\$1,567.6
Debt Repayment	\$ 11.2	\$ 11.2	\$ 20.2
Budget Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 11.2	(\$ 33.8)	\$ 20.2
Maintenance Funding		\$ 75.0	
Revised Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 11.2	\$ 741.2	\$ 20.2

The U of T and the Economic Crisis

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in 2009-10. All other revenue sources added \$96.6 million to the operating budget, 7% of the total, in 2008-09. The administration projects that these revenues will rise to \$107.5 million in 2009-10.

Despite severe investment losses, growth in more significant sources of operating revenue will increase total operating revenue from \$1,415.5 million in 2008-09 to \$1,437.6 million in 2009-10. Nevertheless, the U of T may borrow up to \$45.0 million in 2009-2010, depending upon requests from particular faculties.

The administration will keep paying \$11.2 million annually against its small existing debt, reducing this fiscal year’s maximum possible deficit to \$33.8 million (just 2% of U of T operating revenue). The arrival of new federal and provincial funding for deferred maintenance and repairs could even turn this minor deficit into a surplus.

The U of T budget is not nearly as grim as is often implied. There is no financial justification for layoffs or other workplace restraints.

— *Erin Weir*

Erin Weir is an economist with the United Steelworkers’ Canadian National Office. For more commentary from Erin and other progressive economists, check out:

www.progressive-economics.ca/
relentless/



CLC: Fix Unemployment Insurance NOW

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THOUSANDS OF CANADIAN WORKERS are turning to self-employment because they can’t find jobs or get Employment Insurance, says Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) President Ken Georgetti.

“We’re seeing unemployed workers, especially older workers, turning to self-employment in desperation. There is little out there in the way of job creation and far too many people can’t get Employment Insurance.”

Georgetti was responding to the release by Statistics Canada of labour force figures for April. The level of employment increased by 35,900, due entirely to the rise in self-employment.

“This is not a sign of economic recovery because we actually lost 1,100 jobs in April. What we are seeing is workers doing whatever they can to get by during this economic crisis. I salute their courage and determination,” he says.

“Statistics Canada data shows that almost 60 per cent of unemployed workers are not receiving EI benefits.”

The CLC has repeatedly called on the government to:

- **Change accessibility rules to provide regular EI benefits on the basis of 360 hours of work, no matter where people live and work**
- **Make all workers eligible for up to 50 weeks of EI benefits**
- **Raise Benefits immediately to 60 per cent of earnings, calculated on a worker’s best 12 weeks of earnings**

— *CLC / CALM*

Women of Steel: 'Finding Common Ground'

Finding common ground among working women across borders and across sectors was the focus of the *National Women of Steel: Sisters in Global Solidarity Conference* held in Vancouver in November 2008. The three-day conference featured panels, workshops and political action which linked global issues like trade agreements, precarious work and women's political participation to our local workplaces and communities. Mary Bird and Colleen Burke represented Local 1998 at the conference.

At first glance, our local does not seem to have much in common with our fellow Steelworkers in the manufacturing, mining or forestry sectors, many of whom are facing plant closings and massive layoffs. However, when we got to meet each other and discuss our concerns, many common themes emerge.

Pay equity and job evaluation was the topic of a teach-in entitled *"Equality Now."* Carole Jodoin from the Steelworkers National Office noted that the pay gap impacts women throughout their working life and beyond. As the advisor to our own local on job evaluation, Carole also emphasized the importance of job evaluation. The process of having women describe their jobs and having co-workers and employers recognize the importance of their work has a positive impact on women's self-esteem in addition to the practical result of correcting unequal pay structures.

Speakers at the conference also encouraged participants to get politically involved at every level: from the union local to the community

to elected office. Ferne Downey from ACTRA (Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists) noted that women have a million reasons not to get involved in their union: they feel that they are too old, too young, too inexperienced, too busy, etc. Despite the work involved, members get so much back from being engaged in the union and unions definitely benefit from women's involvement.

Health and safety issues were also on the agenda at the conference. A member who represented security guards in Quebec reported on their struggle to improve working conditions for their members, who often work in isolated conditions and for multiple employers. Unfortunately, it took the murder of one of the guards for employers to take action. Other speakers talked about the health and safety risks of industrial workplaces, from injuries and inadequate safety equipment, to the risk of cancers from long-term exposures to chemicals. Stress and violence at the workplace are becoming more frequent. Mary Bird gave a presentation on the results of the recent U of T Staff Environment Survey conducted by Dr. Jennifer Berdahl in which she noted that problems like sexual and ethnic harassment, social undermining and bullying can all have a direct impact on workers' health. Global solidarity was very much on the agenda at the conference, with speakers from Mozambique, Mexico, South Africa and the United Kingdom. Gabriella Barrueta



Mary Bird (shown here) and Colleen Burke represented Local 1998 at the Women of Steel Conference in Vancouver.

(who had made a presentation to Local 1998 in October) discussed the impact of NAFTA on the Mexican people and the government's move to privatize the oil industry which will take billions of dollars out of government revenue which could be used for social services. Helena Taipo, the Minister of Labour for Mozambique, discussed her successes in forcing multinational corporations to abide by Mozambiquan labour standards.

The National Women of Steel conference was an opportunity for new and experienced union members to connect and learn from each other. Through formal presentations and social interaction, we were able to see the common threads which weave through working women's lives, whether we are administrative workers at the University of Toronto, factory workers in Ontario, loggers in BC or security guards in Mozambique. Through solidarity and action, we can work to improve all of our lives.

— Colleen Burke, CERIS

Job Re-Classification & You: An Interview with "Mr. Re-Classification"

P.C. Choo was one of three Principals of the Job Evaluation Committee who were seconded to the Union to work on job evaluation in 2004. During his tenure there, Choo handled close to 90 cases of job re-classification. Popularly known as 'Mr. Re-Classification', *Steeldrum* caught up with Choo recently and interviewed him about his work.

SD: How did you become involved in job re-classification?

Choo: As Principals of the Job Evaluation Committee made their rounds on campus, it became evident very early on that there are many jobs that are under-classified. Concerned that the job evaluation process is going to take a long time before it is concluded, Allison Dubarry, President of Local 1998, designated me to deal with the issue of job re-classification. *I really have to give Allison credit for that.* She realized right from the start that our members should not have to wait for years to have their jobs re-classified.

SD: What do you mean when you say that jobs are under-classified?

Choo: Jobs constantly evolve but somehow, job descriptions never got updated. For example, I have one case where the job description did not even mention the word 'computer' but the incumbent does 90% of her work on the computer! A job is considered under-classified when it has evolved so much that it has become almost unrecognizable compared with the original job description.

SD: What percentage does a job has to change before you would consider re-classification?

Choo: As a rule of thumb, there must be a minimum change of between 20% and 25% either in the scope or level of responsibility before I would consider it. In job evaluation, volume does not count.

SD: Have you turned down any requests for re-classification?

Choo: Yes, I did. Not every case meets the criteria for a re-classification. I have to be honest with our members and tell them the truth even if that is not what they want to hear. I would rather tell them the truth when I know their case is unlikely to succeed. Beside, I have to be fair. If a request for re-classification does not meet the criteria, I would not want to sic it on management.

SD: It has been said that it is quite hard to get a re-classification. Is that true?

Choo: Yes and no. Out of the approximately ninety cases that I have handled, only four got re-classified on the first attempt. The majority of the successful cases got re-classified on the second or third attempt. Others simply gave up when the process takes too long or they become discouraged. The process can be brutal and drain you emotionally. Others left their old jobs because they successfully applied for other jobs at a higher level. I know of at least one case where after years of battling Human Resources, the incumbent simply gave up and retired. The best analogy I use is that when you are requesting a re-classification, be like a dog with a bone — in other words, be tenacious and refuse to let go.

SD: How long does the whole process take?

Choo: It all depends. The fastest case I handled took a mere two weeks. The longest took fifteen months. On average, the process takes six to twelve months.

SD: What do you see as the main obstacles in requesting a job re-classification?

Choo: HR! I have cases where the request was supported by the Head of the Department and even the Chair of the Department and HR says 'No'. Also, the absence of language in the collective agreement may be a bit of an impediment but it has not prevented us from successful re-classifications.

SD: Have you ever filed a grievance over the failure to re-classify?

Choo: I believe filing a grievance should be the last resort. Instead, I encourage our members to keep requesting a re-classification. After all that is said and done, in the end, you still have to work with your supervisor. Filing a grievance tends to harden positions on both sides and I try to avoid that. Having said that, in the end, we may have no choice but to file a grievance.

SD: Can you share some success stories?

Choo: Sure, but that will be another story for a future issue of *Steeldrum*.

SD: Thank you.

Choo: You are welcome.

Since returning to Admissions & Awards in July 2007, Choo is handling only those cases referred to him by President Allison Dubarry.

Members who have queries about their jobs and re-classification can contact Nik Redman at 416. 506. 9090 or at nik.redman@usw1998.ca

— Lori May, OISE / UT

Job Evaluation Q & A

Job Evaluation: What does this have to do with pay equity?

Pay equity is equal pay for work of equal value. The Ontario Pay Equity Act requires that jobs be evaluated and work mostly or traditionally done by women be compared to work mostly or traditionally done by men. Achieving pay equity at U of T is a key aim of our job evaluation process. Once the jobs are rated, we will compare jobs that are considered to be traditionally “male” (like IT) or “female” (like administration) and see where there are differences in pay. In an ideal world, “male” and “female” jobs which received a similar rating score, would be paid at similar levels. However, we know very well that we live in the real world where “women’s work” has been taken for granted and underpaid since women joined the workforce. The aim of the job evaluation process is to close this gender gap and make sure that our male and female union members are paid fairly according to the actual work that they do. The union and university will be negotiating adjustments to compensate female employees who were underpaid in the old system.

Why is all of this taking so long?

Evaluating more than 3500 jobs is a very big and complex job and the Job Evaluation Committee has been at it for 6 years. The union has had to negotiate every step of this process with management: from the questions included in the job evaluation questionnaires, how and when they were distributed to staff,

the factors used for rating, the timelines, and so on. The union has put a lot of resources into this process because it is so important. We want to get this right and ensure that we put into place a fair, equitable and transparent system that will benefit current and future staff.

What’s happening now?

We finished the job classification part of the project at the end of February. This involved carefully reading each and every submitted questionnaire and grouping positions with similar duties and responsibilities into 550 distinct Job Classes. We then negotiated and finalized these classes in meetings with the university and agreed to wording on a summary of the education, qualifications and duties of each class.

The Committee is now working hard on rating these job classes. Once again, we’re going through the questionnaires very carefully to get a clear picture of the complexities of what our members do. We are reading your words to really understand what you do in a day: what kind of decisions you make, what kind of stress you’re experiencing, what education and experience you think is needed to do your job well, etc. We then assign a score for each of the factors. We will exchange our ratings numbers with the university and we will negotiate with them to resolve disagreements.

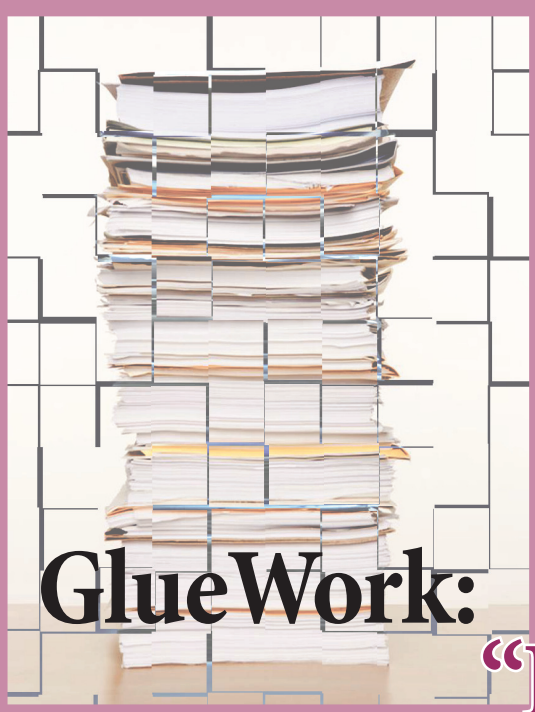
Why have I been contacted to fill out a survey?

We distributed the job evaluation questionnaires in 2007 and our members filled them out at that time. They have been an invaluable resource in our work. Some of the job classes are “single incumbent” which means that there is only one person in the university doing that particular job at that pay level. We want to rate that job class as accurately as possible. If there is no questionnaire, we have to rely on the job description which may be very brief or out of date. We know that you’re busy and that it takes time to do the questionnaire, but no one knows your job better than you do. We want to advocate on your behalf and ensure that you are fairly compensated. If you’ve been asked recently to fill out a questionnaire, please take the time to do it.

I think my job should be reclassified now. Do I have to wait?

No! If you feel that your job is underclassified, you can go ahead and request reclassification under the old system. Please contact your steward.

“We’re going through the questionnaires very carefully to get a clear picture of the complexities of what you do: what kind of decisions you make, what kind of stress you’re experiencing, and what education and experience is needed to do your job well.”



GlueWork:

“Down Among the Women”

ONE OF THE CHALLENGES of job evaluation is exposing and appropriately evaluating the work of women whose main function is to ensure that everyday teaching and other University services function well and that disputes and conflicts are contained.

Their job descriptions may feature long lists of tasks such as reconciling accounts, preparing grant applications or maintaining schedules, that obscure these primary, “relational” duties on which the smooth functioning of the University’s offices, centres and departments rests.

Relational require significant skill but are taken for granted because they are accepted as “what women do” and because the values that inform them — personal relationships, teaching, loyalty and collaborative innovation — differ from those that typify conventional male leadership.

Constantly negotiating with staff, students, faculty and administrators to meet competing demands and to work in the best interests of the University is at the core of hundreds of, mostly female, administrative jobs. Understanding, detailing and recognizing the importance of this kind of female leadership is one of the missions of the Job Evaluation team.

Joan Eveline in her study of the female staff of the University of Western Australia, *Ivory Basement Leadership*, calls attention to this “Glue work” and details its devaluation and consequences for female staff. She proposes that there are four areas in which traditional women’s work of nurturing, facilitating and repairing human relationships is, at best, ignored but more, frequently denied. Her observations provide a valuable foil for the data compiled from the questionnaires of our members who work in administrative positions. While the University relies on women administrative staff to provide the glue work, they are regularly thwarted by an unsupportive structure:

Physical spaces provided for administrative staff

The work space rarely can be called one’s own. The “hidden” responsibility to facilitate cooperation necessitates that most administrative staff work in open and shared spaces where they regularly may be interrupted and distracted by the queries, requests and demands of students, faculty and other staff.

Responsibilities of staff and crediting of expertise:

The skills in the work of general staff receive little reward or attention. Administrative staff regularly shoulder and execute highly sophisticated responsibilities such as the budget or grant application preparation, conference and event planning and project management to the point of

sign off by management. Their contributions “disappear” and are credited to someone else’s work.

Lack of encouragement for development activities:

While technical staff are given time to update their skills in courses and workshops, administrative staff are expected to learn new skills on the job. Interacting with a piece of expensive equipment is more likely to be valued than the carrying on dozens of complex interactions with people.

Relative lack of career opportunities:

While glue work provides stability and continuity to workplaces, it rarely opens doors to career advancement. The paradox of glue work is that the more successful it is, the more invisible it is. Because much of their work is unseen and most is undervalued, administrative workers are unlikely to be encouraged to seek growth opportunities. Further, opportunities may exist only by leaving a department where administrative workers have established both skills and loyalties and where the possibility of promotion is based not upon an individual’s contribution, but on the needs and resources of the work unit.

— book review by *Carolellen Norskey*, Job Evaluation Committee

“Ivory Basement Leadership: Power and Invisibility in the Changing University”
By Joan Eveline UWA Press, 2004 ISBN 1920694218, 9781920694210

book
review

In Memoriam:

GOD WORKS IN STRANGE AND mysterious ways. Margaret and I were talking the day prior to her passing about why she should not be smoking because lung cancer is not a very pleasant way to die. Then the subject of death came up.

As Margaret normally did, she joked about her own mortality. She said something that will stay in my mind for a long time. "Mary," she said, "When I die, I want to die in my sleep." I laughed and replied, "Who wouldn't like to die so peacefully?"

Saturday March 8, 2009 was the last day of her life. She went to get her hair done, complained all day about chest pains, but refused to go to the hospital thinking it was only anxiety. Margaret loved reading and that night she read her last novel. She was found the next morning by a friend, with the book covering her face. She would have celebrated her 58th birthday on March 25.

There are only a handful of people who come into your world and touch your life in a dramatic fashion. Some of the people are just flickers of light during a long life, while others are consistent glows for years. For me, Margaret was my consistent glow. She was my best friend and co-worker for nearly ten years.

I can honestly say that there are only a few people who have walked into my life and changed it forever. Margaret was a person I enjoyed spending time with. She taught me that life is short and the most important part of life is the people in it. I will be grateful for her teachings forever.

Margaret, you have graced my life more than you will ever know. I miss you terribly.

Margaret was a true friend to so many people. I know they all miss her but I will miss her the most. I was the friend she saw daily, the friend who looked forward to seeing her to share stories and experiences. We laughed



Margaret Hewer

March 25, 1950 — March 8, 2009

and cried together.

Her sudden passing has made a lot of us re-evaluate the quality of our lives. The past is gone and the future is not here yet. We only have the present. Own it and enjoy each day in memory of Margaret Hewer.

God bless you, my friend. Rest in Peace.

With all my love,

— Mary Stathopoulos,
Electrical and Computer Engineering

"Some people are just flickers of light during a long life, while others are consistent glows for years. Margaret was my consistent glow. She was my best friend and co-worker for ten years."

Steelworkers International President receives Larry Sefton Award

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In his acceptance speech, Leo described the current economic crisis as *"the final verdict of a failed ideology."* He also described the battle to pass the Employee Free Choice Act in the United States which he said would *"change the climate of industrial relations in the U.S."* and expressed the hope that President Obama's economic plan will *"return to an economy that*

puts people first."

In accepting the award, Leo called upon Lynn Williams, a former International President of the Steelworkers and 1998 Sefton Award winner who was present at the ceremony, to join him on stage. Leo said that he was both proud and humbled to have his mentor attend the ceremony.

Past winners of the Sefton Award include

Bob White, former President of the Canadian Labour Congress; Alan Borovoy of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association; and Leah Casselman, former President of OPSEU.

John Mastoras, an Adjunct Professor at U of T, won the Morley Gunderson Prize in Industrial Relations.

Following the award presentation, Hugh Mackenzie, Principal of the Hugh Mackernzie & Associates, delivered the 2009 Sefton Memorial Lecture.

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