

Welcome to the University of Lethbridge Faculty Association



Contents

- About Us3
- Association Objectives4
- The Collective Agreement5
- Membership.....7
- The Role of the Association8
- Governance.....10
- Ombuds Officer13
- Staff..... 14
- Duty of Fair Representation.....15
- Member Accompaniment.....16
- Member Advising.....17
- Grievances18
- Confidentiality20
- Your Benefits21
- Contact Us.....23

ABOUT

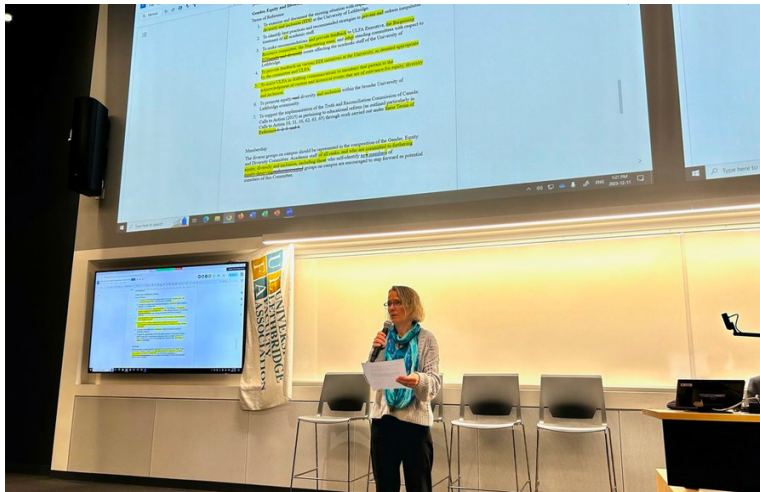


The University of Lethbridge Faculty Association (ULFA) is a democratic, membership-based organization of academic staff. Their overarching goals are to promote the collective interests of its Members, to protect and enhance the freedom and quality of teaching, scholarship, debate, thought and research; as well as to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion, workplace health and safety within the University community and improving the overall quality of academic life at the University of Lethbridge.

ULFA is deemed a trade union by §58.3 of the Alberta Labour Relations Code and is recognized as the exclusive bargaining agent for all 600 academic staff at the University of Lethbridge in matters including salaries, benefits, and terms and conditions of employment pursuant to §84 of the Post-Secondary Learning Act.

ASSOCIATION OBJECTIVES

The principal purposes of the Association are to represent and support the collective interests of the academic staff, to promote and defend independence of thought and freedom of expression in teaching, research, and community service, to ensure due process in matters of dispute between a Member and the Board of Governors with respect to the collective agreement, and to collaborate with provincial and national associations of university teachers in matters of mutual interest.



THE ACADEMIC STAFF COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

Our collective agreement is a legally binding and enforceable contract between the Association, which represents the academic staff, and the Board of Governors of the University of Lethbridge (the employer). The agreement is mutually negotiated as required by the Alberta Labour Relations Code and sets out all the terms and conditions of employment, including salaries and benefits, processes for tenure and continuing appointments, discipline, appeals, and grievances, as well as provisions for leaves (such as sick leave, maternity and parental leaves as well as other leaves as approved). The collective agreement represents all academic staff, including Faculty Members, Professional Librarians, Instructors, Academic Assistants, and Sessional Lecturers.

Collective bargaining is the foundation of ULFA's work. It involves periodic negotiation of salaries, benefits, and terms and conditions of employment that are legally binding until such time as the agreement expires and the University and the Association form a new agreement or job action (Strike and/or Lockout) occurs. On ULFA's side, the bargaining process typically involves: consultation with Members at special meetings, through surveys, and via advisory committees; the development of proposals and research to support those proposals; and a series of meetings with a team representing the Board of Governors to consider proposals from both sides and attempt to reach agreement. Should the parties be unable to reach agreement, the Alberta Labour Relations Code's default options are lockout/strike, though mediation and/or arbitration may be possible.

THE ACADEMIC STAFF COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT CONT.

Once a tentative agreement has been signed by the negotiating teams and recommended to the Membership via the Executive, it must be ratified by the Membership and the Board of Governors in order for it to become the new collective agreement. ULFA Members vote for ratification via E-ballot, following a general meeting.



MEMBERSHIP

Ultimately, the Association is organized and run by its 600 members from all disciplines and units across two campuses (Lethbridge and Calgary). As the University is an institution that focuses on teaching, learning, and research, our members play a pivotal role in the life and success of the institution.

Members include all levels of the professoriate (Assistant, Associate, and full Professors), Professional Librarians (Grades II/III/IV), Instructors (I/II/III), Academic Assistants (I/II/III), and Sessional Lecturers (I and II) and, both collectively and individually, our Members contribute to the functioning and betterment of academia.

Job categories that are not part of the Association include visiting and adjunct faculty, clinical faculty, postdoctoral fellows, research associates, graduate students, emeritus faculty, administrative professional officers (APOs). Senior academic administrators are inactive Members of ULFA and are represented in their academic roles. Inactive Members do not participate in Association activities.

All full- and part-time academic staff are automatically members of ULFA, the provincial Confederation of Alberta Faculty Associations (CAFA), the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), and the CAUT Defence Fund. Currently, ULFA dues are paid on a mill rate basis and are deducted from each Member's monthly salary.



ROLE OF THE ASSOCIATION

The Association:

- Represents all academic staff at the University of Lethbridge;
- Negotiates the collective agreements with the Board of Governors;
- Provides information and resources to Members;
- Protects the rights and interests of the academic staff through grievances
- Promotes the interests of the academic staff through collective bargaining
- Represents the academic staff in the Councils of the University.

ROLE OF THE ASSOCIATION CONT.

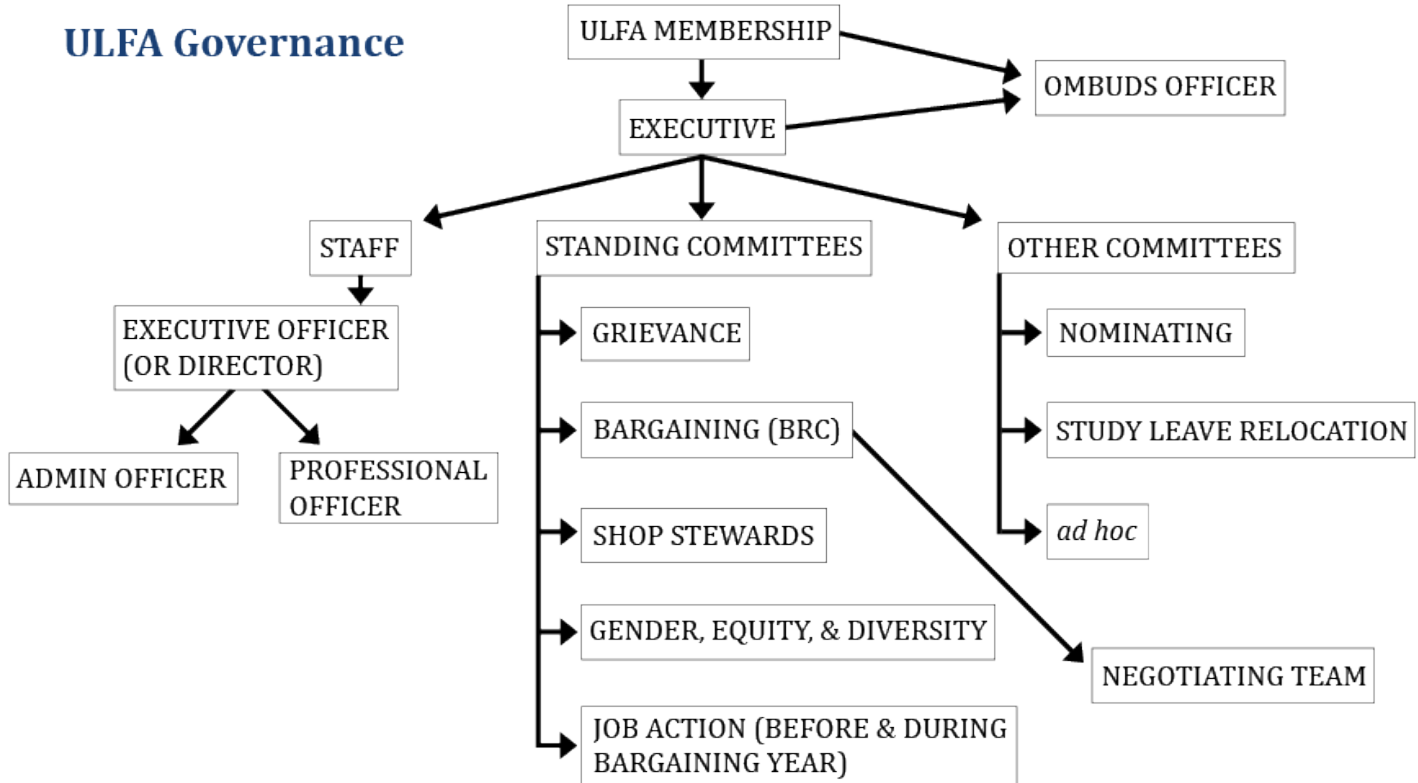
The Association is funded almost entirely by Member dues and the organization is ultimately accountable to its Members. We keep in touch with Members through our website, newsletters, email, workshops, events and meetings. There is an Annual General Meeting in April of every year, a Fall General Meeting in December, and Special General Meetings as needed throughout the year.



In addition to being the sole bargaining agent for its members, the Association provides various other services designed to support academic staff in all aspects of their careers, from candidacy for academic positions through to retirement. (See YOUR BENEFITS below for more information.)

GOVERNANCE

ULFA Governance



The Association is governed by constitutional bylaws and by the democratically elected representatives of the Executive. Members of the Executive are responsible and accountable to the general membership through the democratic process and adhere to a Code of Conduct. The Executive acts on behalf of the Association as a collective, subject to the direction of the general membership. The Executive comprises the President, Past-President, Vice-President, Secretary/Treasurer, and four (or five in a bargaining year) Members who are elected as chairs of each of the standing committees. The President is the senior official of the Executive and is chiefly responsible for the overall operation of the organization, external relations, supervision of the meetings, and for presiding over the general meetings.

Reporting to the Executive are four standing committees (five in a bargaining year) that assist with the overall mandate of the Association. Each standing committee comprises representatives from various faculties and includes a diversity of ranks to represent Faculty, Professional Librarians, Instructors/Academic Assistants, and Sessional Lecturers.

The Association relies on the volunteer efforts of its Members. As a Member, anyone can run for elected office, volunteer on a committee, assist with expert research and advice, participate in debates in public fora and general meetings, or provide support in a variety of other ways. Work performed for ULFA counts as service work for the University in the evaluation of duties. If you are interested in helping with the work of the Association, please contact the office.

Grievance Committee: deals with complaints, appeals and grievances as set out in the collective agreements, makes recommendations to the Executive to pursue a grievance.

Gender, Equity and Diversity Committee: examines and documents issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) that affect the academic staff of the University with the intention of developing a profile of diversity, suggesting strategies to redress inequities, making recommendations to the negotiating team, and working with the general membership on EDI issues.

Bargaining Resource Committee: is an investigative, deliberative and advisory body whose proper sphere of action includes all matters relating to collective bargaining of the terms and conditions of employment of the Membership.

Job Action Committee: Active during bargaining years, it is the regulatory committee tasked with fulfilling the logistical duties associated with conducting job action (such as lockout or strike) in compliance with ULFA's Job Action Policy.

Shop Stewards Committee: responds to inquiries from fellow Members about their rights and responsibilities under the Collective Agreement and promotes ULFA goals and mandates in the workplace and union consciousness more broadly. Represents the interests of Association Members by assisting the Grievance Committee Chair, staff of the association, and Shop Stewards Chair in identifying and processing the initial stages of grievances, and by acting as an advocate on behalf of Members in grievances, complaints and accompaniments to meetings with a Member's supervisor. Represent the interests of Association Members by assisting the Bargaining Resource Committee Chair, and ULFA staff in identifying areas of improvement in the Academic Staff Collective Agreement.

In addition to the standing committees, there exists a Nominating Committee, and a Study Leave Relocation Committee. The Association also has membership on a number of General Faculties Council Committees and a representative to the Board of Governors.

OMBUDS OFFICER

In the event of a conflict between a statutory Member and any member of the Executive, the Ombuds Officer is tasked with assessing and investigating complaints. The Ombuds Officer is intentionally kept at arm's length from the internal goings-on of the Executive in order to preserve impartiality and adheres to the principle of confidentiality.



STAFF

The staff's job is to serve the Members and advance the Association's interests as directed by the Executive. Please contact the office if you need information or assistance regarding any employment-related matter or issue.

The Association has three continuing, full-time staff members:

Aaron Chubb: Executive Director: reports to the President and is primarily responsible for overall office organization, carrying out the operation of the Association subject to Executive guidance, and providing advice to Members.

Karl Laderoute: Labour Relations Officer: reports to the Executive Director & President and is primarily responsible for Member relations and grievance matters.

Megan Mericle: Administrative Officer: reports to the Executive Director & President and is primarily responsible for Member communications, website maintenance, financial and office administration, and is the first point of contact for the office.

DUTY OF REPRESENTATION

The role of the Association is governed by the duty of fair representation. The duty of fair representation may be defined as the responsibility to represent all Members in the bargaining unit and in doing so the Association must act in a manner that is neither arbitrary, discriminatory, nor in bad faith. Representation shall not be capricious nor superficial, and shall be based on a thorough understanding of the situation with respect to grievable matters.



MEMBER ACCOMPANIMENT

The Association is committed to protecting the rights and privileges of its Members and, as such, Members may request to be accompanied by any ULFA Member in good standing to attend meetings with the employer as a witness or advocate in any matter connected to the collective agreement. Members are under no obligation to justify the use of accompaniment and there are no restrictions on who this accompanier may be with the exception of the ULFA—President. If attendance is requested of a member of the Executive, staff, or standing committees, all reasonable attempts will be made to provide accompaniment.

ULFA accompaniment is recommended for:

- Meetings between an ULFA Member and the employer including, but not limited to, meetings with Human Resources, Deans, Directors of Schools, Vice-Presidents, or University disciplinary committees;
- Meetings regarding Members' rights under the collective agreement or legislation, as well as all University disciplinary procedures;
- Negotiations for special consideration, accommodation, or variation of the collective agreement between the Member and the employer.

MEMBER ADVISING

In seeking assistance, Members are encouraged to contact the Association should there be any concerns about an issue of employment. The Executive members, members of standing committees, and staff are knowledgeable individuals who work with the collective agreement on a regular basis and are well-positioned to provide support and advice. The Association can often resolve issues in an informal manner without resorting to the grievance process; however, if an issue does come to a grievance, the Association will work hard on behalf of the individual and all Members to ensure a favourable result. All information will be handled with confidentiality and matters are disclosed only as necessary for representation in a complaint resolution process or for seeking legal advice. For more information, or to obtain advice, please contact the ULFA office.



Members have the right (and are strongly encouraged) to have ULFA accompaniment to meetings with any supervisor or senior administrator regarding employment matters.

GRIEVANCES

The Association claims a grievance when the employer violates any of the rights or rules under the collective agreement, legislation, or employer policy; be it accidental or intentional. It is a matter of concern for the Association to address and to resolve issues facing academic staff. If there are concerns of a violation or improper application of the collective agreement, or other rules related to employment. Members are encouraged to contact the Association office for assistance.

Most grievances are individual Member grievances in which only one person is affected; however, the Association also deals with group and policy grievances in which groups of people or the entire Membership may be affected. Typically, issues that arise are first handled informally through discussions between the Association and the employer. When we are unable to resolve an issue informally, the Association has the ability to file a grievance.

GRIEVANCES CONT.

The grievance process in the collective agreement has three stages:

- Stage 1: Informal meeting
- Stage 2: Submission of formal written grievance
- Stage 3: Arbitration

Each stage is governed by specific timelines and so it is important to inform the Association of an issue in a timely manner settlements or withdrawal of the grievance can occur at any stage. For information on any of the stages, please contact the ULFA office and refer to the Academic Staff Collective Agreement. The Association has its own internal procedures for handling a grievance and ultimately retains carriage rights for pursuing formal grievances; However, the union does extensively consult with impacted Members about their preferred course of action. The Grievance Chair and ULFA staff can assist Members during the various stages of the grievance procedures.

Grievance files are kept in the ULFA office. Though materials will be treated as confidential, information regarding the grievance may be made available to the Executive if it is determined that arbitration is necessary or is requested.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The Association officers and staff will keep information in confidence. In some cases, it may be possible to resolve Member issues anonymously. Most times, however, the Association may need to share details with the employer in order to come to a resolution. Neither the Association nor employer will distribute this information further than needed to resolve issues.

Members have a right to appear before the Grievance committee to explain their case. Otherwise the identity of a grievor is only revealed to the Grievance committee or Executive when pertinent and necessary to make a decision. Members are consulted when it is necessary to reveal their identity to either the Grievance Committee, executive or employer to advance or resolve a grievance. The Association may report broad information about member issues, including the issue itself and how it was resolved. The Association will never publish the name or department of any individuals without explicit permission. If a grievance progresses to an arbitration hearing, the arbitrator's decision and the names of those involved will become a matter of public record.

YOUR BENEFITS



In addition to being the sole bargaining agent for its members, the Association provides various other services designed to support academic staff in all aspects of their academic careers, from candidacy for academic positions through to retirement. Complementary to the benefits in the collective agreement (see schedule B of the Academic Staff Collective Agreement) the Association offers a number of great opportunities.

ULFA Academic Scholarship: This scholarship is available to any full-time student who is the spouse or dependent child of a dues-paying statutory Member, whether they attend the University of Lethbridge or another recognized university. For more information, contact the Scholarships and Student Finance office of the University of Lethbridge.

Study Leave Relocation Fund: This fund is intended to subsidize academic staff who relocate during study leave. The Study Leave Relocation Committee oversees the distribution and approval of applications for Members going on study leave. For more information, contact the ULFA office.

Workshops: The Association offers a variety of workshops on topics related to salary, tenure, and promotion (STP). The STP Workshop for prospective applicants is held each year in the spring and the STP Workshop for chairs and committee members of the adjudicating committees is held in the fall. The Association also keeps Members informed with jointly offered workshops with the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) on topics including negotiation training, grievance handling, and media relations.

Newsletters: The Association produces an email newsletter for Members that includes updates from the President and chairs of the standing committees and contains relevant information about the goings-on of the Association and upcoming events and deadlines. News and events are also published on the website at www.ulfa.ca.

Social Events: The Association hosts social events throughout the year for all academic staff, including the fall social that introduces new Members to the broader Membership and the socials at the Annual and Fall General Meetings.

General Communications: The Association communicates with its Members primarily through its listservs and the www.ulfa.ca website. As a dues-paying statutory Member, you should automatically receive all communications. For any concerns or questions, contact the ULFA office.

CONTACT US

University of Lethbridge Faculty Association

Room D620, University Hall

4401 University Drive

Lethbridge, AB T1K 3M4



Phone: 403-329-2578

Fax: 403-329-2113

Website: www.ulfa.ca

Office Hours:

Monday – Friday, 8:30am – 4:30pm

Aaron Chubb, ED@ulfa.ca

Karl Laderoute, officer@ulfa.ca

Megan Mericle, admin@ulfa.ca



