

FACULTY NEWS & VIEWS

The Bow Valley College Faculty Association's Newsletter

A message from the President!

President, Penny Marcotte

It's safe to say that the 2020-21 academic year has been one like no other, and while there have been many challenges there have also been a lot of successes. So, I thought I would take the opportunity to take stock of what's been happening for faculty.

Highlights from the academic year

We as a faculty managed to transition all our course offerings to online delivery, including many that had never been done in such a way before. And while there's surely an argument that not everything works best in this format, I am proud to say that we have been able to make everything work in this format.

We also have managed a transition back to on campus instruction in a much-reduced format, and have done so with very few COVID cases, and given how things have been going in the province in general this really is something to celebrate!

New and ongoing initiatives at the FA

We have relaunched, with general membership approval, the BVCFA website. This new website will bring the FA fully into this third decade of the 21st century with a much improved and more professional look and with private, dedicated spaces for our membership to stay more connected. Special thanks to our Board of Governors rep Jeff Clemens for the work he did to set this up and make it a reality for us.

IN THIS ISSUE

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

HOME VS OFFICE?

PODCAST & HOW TO

FLIP GRID

WORKLOAD WOES

NEGOTIATIONS UPDATE

COMMUNICATIONS

UPCOMING EVENTS

MEET THE TEAM

President's Message continued, Penny Marcotte

As many of you already know we are now producing a podcast. Dara MacKay, our VP Communications, has worked tirelessly on this and the results are really impressive. If you haven't had a chance to listen yet, what are you waiting for?

Our Wise and Well sessions, put on by VP Professional Affairs Lindsay Bonenfant, have been running strong online since the beginning of the Fall term now, and have been better attended than ever. The next two offerings focus on health and wellness and will be facilitated by our very own Marjorie Contenti (May 21) and Crystal Manyfingers (June 21).

And finally, we've made an effort to keep in touch with membership in a more relaxed and informal way with our "Coffee Chat with Penny and Matt." Membership are free to stop by to chat with me and VP Operations Matt Kriz to discuss anything from the holidays they wish they were taking, to the books they're trying to finish. Look for our next chat coming soon.

In the works at the college

For college activities that affect membership there has been quite a lot of activity. Our negotiations team, led by VP Negotiations Phil Flegel, has been busy bargaining our new Collective Agreement and the hard work continues on that front.

The college has also been working with the FA on a new Workload policy and procedure that looks to better measure what the average workload is for a faculty member, with the emphasis from the FA that it's very hard to pin down what "average" is.

As many of you will know by now the Modern classroom pilot is planned for the Fall 2021 term. This was planned to launch in smaller form for the Spring term, but with new COVID restrictions coming in as of this week it's hard to say when that will start. Regardless, thanks to all faculty members who have agreed to take the plunge on this. The College is planning on moving forward with it on a large scale so it is very important we get faculty feedback on what works and what doesn't.

With the modern classroom is also a plan for the HyFlex delivery model. Just exactly how this will work is still open for discussion, but once again faculty feedback is vital to help make sure this is something we can be comfortable adapting to.

Finally, we know that the college is planning on expanding, in a large way, the Competency Based Education (CBE) and Work Integrated Learning (WIL) programming in the coming terms. Again, faculty input on how this has looked so far, and what we will need to ensure that we can do this successfully without a huge change in workload, is greatly needed.

In closing, I just wanted to say thank you to everyone for their resilience throughout this difficult period. I know that it hasn't been easy and that it still isn't, but collectively we really have shown just how capable we are.

HOME vs OFFICE

the dividends and damages



NO TRAIN, NO PAIN

The savings in time, money, and commute-related olfactory damage are certainly a nice perk of working from home...

BETTER BREW

... and chances are good that you have a sweeter selection of hot bevies in the kitchen...

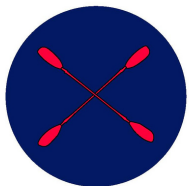


SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

... but losing closeness to our colleagues and cohorts is a special kind of isolation for people-powered professionals like us...

SHOUTING INTO THE VOID

... and that's to say nothing of the insufficiency of supports, sounding-boards, services, and socialization we miss by being on campus...



WITHOUT A PADDLE

... you might have lucked out with home furniture, office supplies, technology, internet, printing... you might be one of many of our colleagues who are reeling from the inequity...

CELL MATES

... and depending on who else is working from home, this truly is an untenable situation for many of us...



IT'S NOT 'JUST' WORKING FROM HOME

It's a raw deal for everyone right now, and the few perks just don't outweigh the costs. But what do YOU think? Did we get it right, or oh-so-wrong?



Click your preference below
and hit submit to take part
in this Google poll



HOME VS. OFFICE

We're curious where BVCFA members stand on this topic, and would love to hear your thoughts!

*Responses will be anonymous but results will be shared

Do you like working from home?

- ☐ Yes, it's great. I'd like to do it long term.
- ☐ No, I need/want to go back to the office, stat.
- ☐ It's okay for now, but I'm looking forward to going back into the office.
- ☐ I'm tolerating it, but there isn't enough support
- ☐ I'd like to divide my time between home and office; I'd like to be trusted with that choice

Thanks
for all your stellar
podcast name
suggestions!

**The winner of the "Name
that PODCAST" is Renée
Clark and the Podcast name
chosen is "You're on Mute:
The BVCFA Podcast"**



This Issue's 'How To'

DARA MACKAY

How to Set Appropriate Boundaries in Remote Work

The past year has been an unprecedented time for the world, not to mention teaching and learning. When we abruptly switched from traditional, face-to-face delivery, to online instruction in our own homes, it was jarring, to say the least. After a year of remote work, we have had so many "about face" changes that it is hard to keep our lives straight in some moments. We've been tested in ways we have likely never seen before in our careers, and we have had to muddle our way through remote work without a precedent to draw from. One thing that has become abundantly clear is that remote work won't be as successful as it can be without clear boundaries between work and home. I've struggled with balance between these two dynamics over the past year, with the former bleeding into the latter and the latter bleeding into the former. Here are some small pieces of advice I have tried to take for myself that have proven helpful for me in the remote work environment. I hope they can help you as well.

1. Get dressed. Honestly, I am being serious. If you don't want home to bleed into work, it's important to wear clothes that you didn't sleep in. Believe me, I know how this goes. My pajamas are so comfortable and easy, and I can wear them all day and feel so cozy.

But, this isn't exactly conducive to a professional work environment. According to behavioral psychologists, this is an important physical behavior that allows our minds to draw a concrete boundary between our work and our homes. So, tip number one is to (at least a little bit) dress like you're going to work when you head to your workspace. This important boundary between "work" and "home" is quite tangible.

2. Take your breaks. It may seem contrite and obvious to say this, however taking clear breaks is an essential boundary to set in your workday. It is very easy to get caught up in our work, and our workload has definitely changed with remote work. Giving yourself breaks that physically take you away from your screen is incredibly important, not only for your body but for your mind. Some ideas for your breaks can include:

- Going for a short walk around the block to get your heart rate up. I take my dog across the street daily at 10:45 to check the mailbox. It's a good, quick, way to get fresh air.
- Refilling your coffee (or beverage of choice) and drinking a glass of water. I keep these things on a different floor to force myself to climb stairs to get them. I have to constantly remind myself to stay hydrated as well.

Continued: How to Set Appropriate Boundaries in Remote Work

Dara MacKay

- Eating a healthy snack that has brain boosting nutrients like coffee, blueberries, nuts & seeds and dark chocolate.
- Doing a five-minute stretch of your back, shoulders, wrists and hands. Sitting in front of a computer all day is hard on your body. See this great article for some stretches you can do at your desk: [6 Stretches To Relieve Muscle Stiffness You Can Do At Your Desk At Work - GymGuider.com](https://www.gymguider.com/6-stretches-to-relieve-muscle-stiffness-you-can-do-at-your-desk-at-work/).

3. Leave work. Set a real, true boundary between yourself and your computer. Pick a time each day that you shut down and walk away from work. This includes emails and Teams messages on your phone. Just because work is in the home, doesn't mean that work is the home. Home is home and work is work. These two things must be separated. If I have finished teaching by 3:30 pm, then I give myself until 4:30 pm to complete what tasks need to be done, and then I close my laptop and walk away from it. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, that laptop doesn't get opened again until I begin my workday the next morning. The same goes for weekends. In this pandemic, ensuring that my evenings and weekends are for me, and for my family, is absolutely paramount. The emotional toll taken on us in the last 14 months will be felt for a long time and making sure our work and lives are in as much balance as we can get will help us with the recovery we need.

There are other ways to set boundaries between home and the job in this remote environment. These are just three ways I try to draw a line between my life and my work. I'd love to hear what strategies you use to set clear boundaries between your work and home lives. Tweet [@BVCFA](https://twitter.com/BVCFA) with some more of your ideas using the hashtag #remotework to join the conversation.



FLIP GRID DESIGN

JEFF CLEMENS

It has been an interesting year.

We went in a few short days from on campus to fully online education, and I would say that overall (despite a few bumps along the way) we did a fantastic job. Despite all the negatives of this past year we can take from this period the knowledge that we can move forward and teach in a whole new way.

Now, one thing that I'm sure most of us got trapped in was the jump into something new and flashy just because it was available. If this happened to you, you are not alone and in fact there have been studies done about how often it happens.

To help with getting past the flash we are going to give you some suggestions on some tools you can potentially use.

One really fun tool to use online is Flipgrid. It is a Microsoft product so you can use it with your Bow Valley login, which makes one step (remembering passwords) easier.

Flipgrid is essentially Snapchat for education. It allows students to create some really great introductions without needing to take the time to write a long intro, edit it and make sure it's something ready to submit. Flipgrid meets them at a place where they're already at (on their phone, usually).

The other benefit of Flipgrid is the really strong community that they've built around this tool. Have a Flipgrid question? There's a good chance if you tweet it out you might even get an answer from the Flipgrid founder (His name is Charlie Miller, [@design2research](https://twitter.com/design2research), and he's a really nice guy) but the main Twitter account ([@flipgrid](https://twitter.com/flipgrid)) is also there with tips tricks and a community to help.

As well, they have some great videos on their [Youtube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqWz8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8) channel and they also have an intro page for their [#flipgridforall Flipgrid page](https://flipgridforall.com).

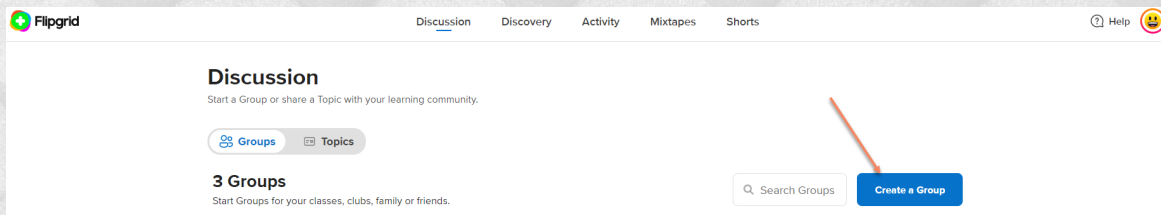
FLIP GRID DESIGN

CONTINUED

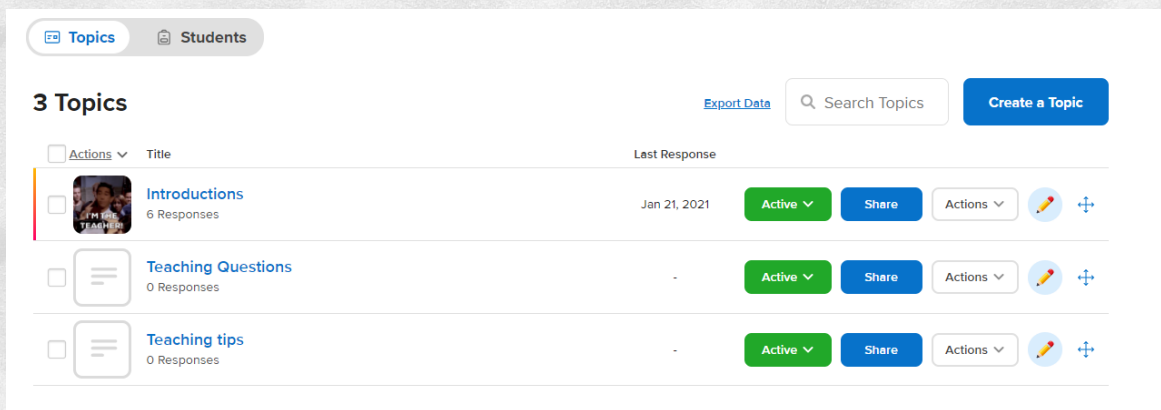
JEFF CLEMENS

With all that in mind there are a lot of different ways you can use Flipgrid.

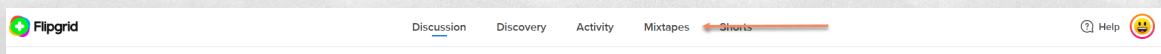
You can create a community on there and invite your peers (we did this for the Tech and Business group) to record intros and share some tips.



You can use these groups for classes and then create topics within those groups to allow people to respond:



Another benefit is if students are using this as a discussion topic you can take those shared videos and create a mixtape that everyone can watch with all the videos together:



There are a lot of interesting ways to use this tool, but a great start for this is to simply create a topic and start with an introduction. Start it easy and move from there to see if it works for you.



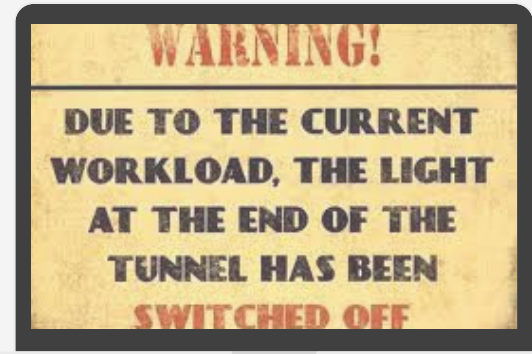
Workload Woes

KIM SMITH

Some conversations are never easy to have, like telling your friend they have an entire bed of spinach wedged in their front teeth. Or better yet, discreetly revealing to them that they are flying low. In these cases, you have two options, you can dance around the subject, using sign language or Morse code until hopefully they get the point and possibly rectify the issue before anyone else notices, or you can just come out and tell them the facts, which might be embarrassing for both of you. Still, hey, it gets the job done. Either way, your strategy is to make a change and make it quickly so that there are no more casualties.

As anyone who has met with me knows, I am a straight talker. I like direct and precise conversation. I want to avoid using convoluted words that are subject to multiple meanings. The same thinking applies to difficult conversations at work, specifically, telling your Associate Dean you have too much work. The best way to ensure you can lighten your load is to speak directly about the issue and provide alternatives.

Telling your AD you have too much on your plate may not be easy, but it is necessary. Avoiding this conversation without stating the obvious, which is, you need more time or you cannot handle the load, will mean you'll be forced to figure out your own solutions, or even worse, left to struggle through the semester, all to get an even heavier workload the next semester because now you've shown you can handle it! Or can you? The stress that ensues will decrease the quality of your work. When you have too much to do, your coworkers lose too. Either way, everyone is losing: your learners, your employer, your fellow faculty members, your family, and most importantly, you and your wellbeing.



So, how do you tell your AD you need to lighten your workload?

The strategy should start with:

1. **Controlling your emotions** - don't let things get to a place where it is unbearable. This always brings out ugly emotions that are hard to control.
2. **Gathering specific information** - stick to the facts. How many hours, tasks and students you have?
3. **Expressing concerns about quality** - Focus on the contributing factors that affect the quality of work, education and life.
4. **Workload Factors discussion Sheet** - The Faculty Association has created a Workload Factors discussion sheet [link here](#) to help facilitate workload conversations. You are welcome to use it, share it, and provide your suggestions on how we can improve it.

In conclusion, a successful conversation about workload with your supervisor means that you have alternative solutions with reasonable deadlines BEFORE you leave that conversation. Let's keep the workload conversation going so that we can ensure all faculty are given reasonable work requirements that are attainable with the resources they need to accomplish both faculty and learner success.



Negotiations Update

Phil Flegel
VP Negotiations

In terms of a negotiation update we are in a holding pattern at the moment. We have finished up our (FA) prep and prepared our bargaining proposals. We were given a list of bargaining protocols (rules for negotiating) from the other side and while we thought most were ok, we made a few counter proposals to the rules which we sent back to the College.

We are awaiting their response. Once the bargaining protocols have been agreed upon, we will move to the exchange of proposals & bargaining will commence. This process likely will commence sometime in May and/or June with a pause in July and August should no agreement be made.

A reminder that the current collective agreement is in effect until a new CA is agreed upon and ratified by both sides.



UPCOMING EVENTS

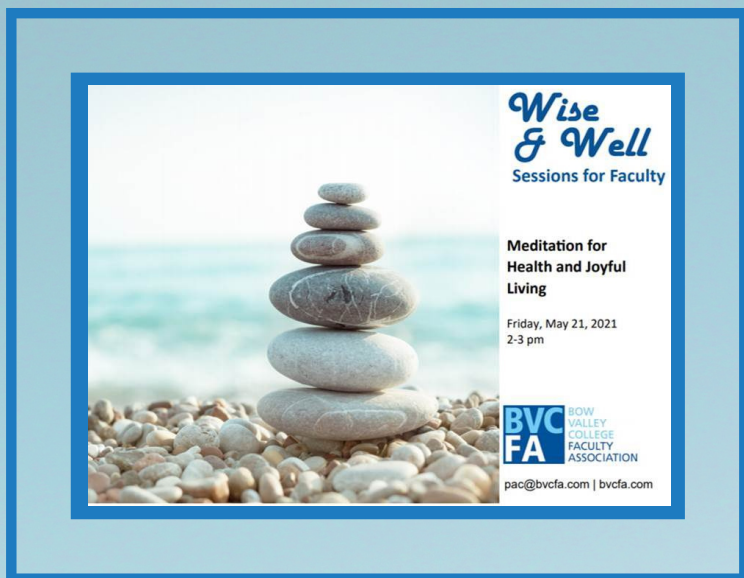
WE'LL SEND AN EMAIL INVITE FOR UPCOMING EVENTS WHEN SCHEDULED!

BVCFA 2021 ELECTION

MAY 6 - 20: NOMINATION PERIOD

MAY 25 - JUNE 3: VOTE VIA SURVEYMONKEY

JUNE 4: ELECTION RESULTS



You're Invited!

BVCFA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2021

ZOOM WEBINAR

June 7, 2021

3:00 PM

Invitation link via email



**mark
your
calendar**



RIDDLES To Ponder

Can you figure out the answers to these riddles?

1. I come one in a minute,
Twice in a moment,
But never in a thousand years.
2. I always run, but never walk.
I have a bed, but I don't sleep.
I have a mouth, but I don't eat.
3. When you put this in a heavy
wooden box, the box will
become lighter.
4. You hear my sound,
You feel me when I move,
But see me you never will.
5. I follow you all day long,
But when the night or rain comes,
I am all gone.
6. The more I dry,
The wetter I get.
7. I am very heavy,
But backwards, I'm not.
8. A cowboy rides into town on Friday.
He stays two days, then leaves on
Saturday. How can this be?

FIND US ONLINE



www.bvcfa.com



[@bvcfa](https://twitter.com/bvcfa)



[Check out the BVCFA blog](#)



Contact Us!

Labour Relations	labourrelations@bvcfa.com
President	president@bvcfa.com
VP Operations	operations@bvcfa.com
VP Negotiations	negotiations@bvcfa.com
VP Professional Affairs	pac@bvcfa.com
VP Communications	communications@bvcfa.com
Treasurer	treasurer@bvcfa.com
Past Executive	pastexec@bvcfa.com
Board of Governors Rep	bogrepresentative@bvcfa.com
Academic Council Faculty Chair	accouncil@bvcfa.com
Office - General Inbox	bvcfa@bvcfa.com

Members-at-Large!

Meet BVCFA's new
Members-at-Large!
Alex May and
Christie Pettipas



What is a Member-at-Large, you ask?

There are three member-at-large positions available; they are non-voting, unofficial members of all Faculty Association (FA) committees, appointed by the FA executive committee upon membership recommendation.

This position is for a term of at least one year, but may serve up to three consecutive years.

This role has an opportunity to get a behind the scenes look on what's going on with the FA Executive, Board of Governors, and Academic Council meetings and can also act as a beneficial liaison, representative or initiator of actions on behalf of the membership.

Reasons you may want to get involved:

1. Have more say in how the FA works.
2. Improve upon our policies and decision making.
3. Build your resume.
4. Grow your skill set.
5. Work with faculty members from other departments.
6. Contribute to the college community

NO prior experience needed for any position!

Whatever the reason, please consider putting your name forward and getting involved.

We are happy to answer any questions about the time commitment, responsibilities, or implications of a role via email!

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to get in touch with anyone on the Executive Team directly or by replying to this email.