BVC FA

October/November 2026

NEWS AND VIEWS

Western Regional Conference

By Kristy Calles, VP Labour and Operations

I had the opportunity to attend the Western Regional Conference of Faculty Associations in Winnipeg from October 22–24. This was my third year attending, and it was particularly fitting to gather in a city known as a birthplace of Canada's modern labour movement! The conference focused on three key themes: threats to post-secondary education (PSE), collegial governance, and academics as labourers.

The Honourable Renée Cable, Manitoba's Minister of Advanced Education and Training and MLA for Southdale, participated in a panel discussion highlighting the importance of advocating for sustainable funding and demonstrating the value and demand for post-secondary programming. A recurring message throughout the conference was that education is increasingly being treated as a commodity, and protecting its broader purpose requires a more unified approach.

Another important takeaway was that meaningful change doesn't always require sweeping action. It can begin with smaller steps, including exercising our rights under collective agreements and becoming more active in academic governance. We need to become more comfortable using the influence we already have.

Looking ahead to our next round of collective bargaining, attendees emphasized the importance of coordinated bargaining among Alberta's faculty associations. When we negotiate in isolation, concessions in one collective agreement can make it more difficult for others to protect or strengthen similar provisions. With the Provincial Bargaining and Compensation Office (PBCO) also restricting our ability to negotiate wages, greater coordination is essential. Quite frankly, we've been negotiating in the dark, and it's time to turn some lights on.

Another concern raised was the significant increase in investigations within post-secondary institutions, particularly those involving student complaints. Questions were raised about how the balance of probabilities is being applied in these processes, something worth paying attention to given the increase in investigations we've also witnessed at BVC. Technological changes and their impact on faculty workloads were also identified as areas requiring greater attention in our collective agreements.

Finally, building unity on campus was a recurring theme, and it's something we're already working toward at BVCFA. Our VP of Communications and Engagement has been doing a terrific job creating school-specific sessions to hear directly from faculty about what's happening in their respective areas. We also need to explore how we can establish and support faculty stewards across the College. More information to come on that!

My biggest takeaway? The challenges facing post-secondary education aren't new, but they aren't going away either. No single faculty association can address them alone. We need to work collectively, advocate for our members, and make better use of the rights and influence we already have. We cannot take our foot off the pedal!

Onward together,
Kristy

Our Website: https://bvcfa.com



NEWS AND VIEWS

Have your say



Upcoming faculty engagement sessions

There are still opportunities to share your experiences, raise concerns, and connect with your Faculty Association.

Technology
Nov. 4 · 3 p.m. (Register by Nov. 2)

Non-instructional faculty, excluding CAI
Nov. 23 · 3 p.m. (Register by Nov. 19)

Extended Education
Nov. 30 · noon (Register by Nov. 26)

Upgrading and English Language Learning (SFL)
Dec. 2 · 3 p.m. (Register by Nov. 30)

All sessions are hybrid. Please refer to your session invitation for registration and attendance details.

Register here!



Faculty engagement: What we're hearing



Thank you to everyone who has participated in our faculty engagement sessions. These conversations are helping us understand what's working, where challenges persist, and where faculty need support.

Themes raised include:

- Workload: Faculty have raised concerns about the workload associated with class sizes, AI, and academic integrity. Article 12 identifies normal hours as 36.25 per week or the equivalent on a monthly basis. Article 14 provides for faculty to manage their schedules in consultation with their immediate supervisor, in accordance with their responsibilities

- TheSIS and communication: Faculty have described additional work arising from manual processes, system limitations, and difficulty getting clear information. Concerns include knowing who is responsible, where to get help, and when outstanding issues will be addressed.

- Competency-based education (CBE): Discussions have raised questions about how workload is recognized in CBE and how program requirements affect instructor autonomy and professional judgment.

- Weekend access and support: Members have raised concerns about access to IT help, buildings, and security during weekend programming. Members have asked for a coordinated approach to weekend support.