Academic Matters

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OCUFA'S JOURNAL OF HIGHER EDUCATION
LA REVUE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR DE L'OCUFA

Re-imagining campus communities

An interview with Marylynn Steckley
International experiential learning: Lessons for a more inclusive future

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Finding space for life outside the ivory tower with *Academic Aunties*

David Heap
Community mobilization in support of contract negotiations: Reflections on the process

Meral Jamal
Diversifying Canada's oldest journalism school

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2 Editorial Matters
Manisha Aggarwal-Schifellite

3 International experiential learning: Lessons for a more inclusive future
Marylynn Steckley
COVID-19 grounded many international experience trips for undergraduate students and faculty researchers and offered a chance to see the field in a new way. What innovations can instructors and institutions take from the upheaval of the last three years?

7 Supporting research communications in challenging times
Amanda Clarke, Howard Ramos, and Julia M. Wright
Academics are encouraged to share their research with the public, but amid reports of harassment of experts online, the rules of engagement are murky. How can scholars protect themselves and what recourse do they have when things go wrong?

13 Finding space for life outside the ivory tower with *Academic Aunties*
Ethel Tungohan, Harshita Yalamarty, and Genevieve Fuji Johnson
How can academics create community for themselves and others? How does that quest intersect with community-based research? Tungohan, host of the *Academic Aunties* podcast, talks to guests about the value of hobbies, activities, and skills beyond work.

17 Community mobilization in support of contract negotiations: Reflections on the process
David Heap
Mobilizing in support of bargaining requires endurance, openness, and coalition building. What steps can faculty associations take to create connections among their members and between groups on and off campus?

20 Diversifying Canada's oldest journalism school
Meral Jamal
In 2020, students and alumni at Carleton University's storied journalism school called out systemic racism and demanded change. Is the university doing the work?

MORE ON ACADEMICMATTERS.CA

This journal is produced in the Dish With One Spoon Territory, which extends from the Great Lakes to Quebec and from Lake Simcoe into the United States. The territory exists as the result of a treaty between the Anishinaabe, Mississaugas, and Haudenosaunee that bound them to protect and share the land and creatures within it. Subsequent Indigenous nations and peoples, Europeans, and all newcomers have been invited into this treaty in the spirit of peace, friendship, and respect. It is in this spirit that each issue of Academic Matters is produced.

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Academic Matters

OCUFA'S JOURNAL OF HIGHER EDUCATION
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Academic Matters is published two times a year by OCUFA, and is received by 17,000 professors, academic librarians, and others interested in higher education issues across Canada. The journal explores issues of relevance to higher education in Ontario, other provinces in Canada, and globally. It is intended to be a forum for thoughtful, thought-provoking, original, and engaging discussion of current trends in postsecondary education and consideration of academia's future direction.

Readers are encouraged to contribute their views, ideas, and talents. Letters to the editor (maximum 250 words) are welcome and may be edited for length. To provide an article or artwork for Academic Matters, please send your query to Editor-in-Chief Manisha Aggarwal-Schifellite at editor@academicmatters.ca.

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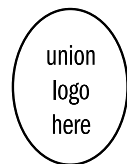

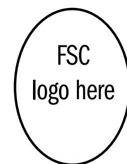

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Editorial Matters

Manisha Aggarwal-Schifellite

IT IS WITH GREAT EXCITEMENT and gratitude that I write my first editor's letter as the new editor-in-chief of *Academic Matters*. The process of putting the magazine together for the first time has been invigorating, particularly because it came with so many other changes in my life that animated the issue theme of community so clearly. A few months ago, I started in my role at OCUFA, moved countries, and set up a new apartment in Toronto.

My new colleagues have been patient and kind as I learn the ropes, pitching in to support endeavors like this publication. My friends and family cooked for me and helped paint my new apartment. I joined a "buy nothing" group for my neighbourhood. These moments of connection have made it clear to me just how important our communities are, and the varied forms those communities can take.

Our ideas about community have been dramatically altered during the last three years. At universities in particular, deep questions emerged about the scope, shape, and role of the campus community: can a university fulfill its academic mission wholly online? What is gained—and lost—from in-person interactions among faculty, students, and staff? How can a researcher go into the field online? What opportunities present themselves to expand our communities virtually?

As it turned out, universities were and remain sites of enormous experimentation, adaptation, and resilience during the depths of the pandemic and in this new, uncertain phase of adjustment. For some, engaging online has been challenging and detrimental, while for others virtual teaching and learning has led to innovation and a welcome change in perspective. It is clear from preliminary research and anecdotal evidence that many of the negative aspects of these changes, such as increased workload and home care, have disproportionately affected women and people from equity-seeking groups.

The articles in this issue of *Academic Matters* explore the many facets of community creation, enhancement, and research that have been called into stark relief over the past few years. In each one, an author expands on the idea of community to imagine what might come next based on what we've learned.

During the pandemic, Marylynn Steckley developed innovations to move her international experiential learning courses online and conduct community-based research in Haiti virtually. Those experiences led her to think more deeply about more inclusive, equitable, and climate justice-based ways forward for student experiences and research abroad in a field that privileges on-the-ground engagement.

Amanda Clarke, Howard Ramos, and Julia M. Wright explore the challenges and excitement of community engagement for scholars who share their work with the public. Building on their recent research, the authors recommend ways for institutions and the government—and scholars themselves—to help scholars stay safe online in a mistrustful and often hostile environment.

In a piece adapted from her podcast *Academic Aunties*, Ethel Tungohan speaks to Genevieve Fuji Johnson and Harshita Yalamarty about how to create community outside of work, from surfing groups to Dungeons and Dragons games. They discuss the value of these activities as scholars and as people, offering tips for academic workers who want to break out of their bubble to learn something new.

For David Heap, returning to in-person campus life helped re-establish bonds between faculty members. These connections were vital to the mobilization efforts of his faculty association as they bargained for a new employment contract with the university and ramped up for possible strike action in Fall 2022.

Finally, the recipient of the 2020-2021 OCUFA Mark Rosenfeld Fellowship in Higher Education Journalism, Meral Jamal, takes us inside Carlton University's journalism school—the oldest in the country—during a time of reckoning around race, diversity, and representation. Meral's article asks: two years after the sea change of June 2020, can an established institution write a new chapter?

I thank each author for contributing their words and time to *Academic Matters*. Their sharp inquiries into the very concept of community—and the research and activism that go along with it—will help us shape the world we want to inhabit going forward, on campus and off.

I'm grateful to past editor Ben Lewis for providing me with excellent resources on which to model this incarnation of *Academic Matters*. I look forward to working with more authors to ask insightful questions about the big issues that we face in the postsecondary education sector. All articles in this issue are available on our website: AcademicMatters.ca.

Thank you. AM

Manisha Aggarwal-Schifellite is the Editor-in-Chief of Academic Matters *and Communications Lead for OCUFA.*

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING:

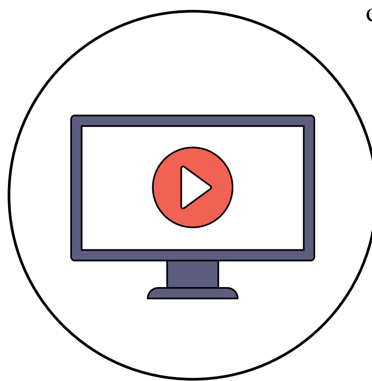
Lessons for a more inclusive future

An interview with Marylynn Steckley

COVID-19 grounded many international experience trips for undergraduate students and faculty researchers and offered a chance to see the field in a new way. What innovations can instructors and institutions take from the upheaval of the last three years?

Marylynn Steckley was no stranger to online learning when the COVID-19 pandemic forced university faculty to transition to virtual learning in March 2020. Steckley had already been teaching an international experiential learning course in Carleton University's Global and International Studies Program for three years before COVID-19 forced faculty across Canada to create virtual courses on short notice. She took that knowledge and applied it to a fully remote Global Social Relations course on crafts, including all-day class meetings and live craft instruction with practitioners around the world. Her innovative approach earned her an OCUFA Teaching Award in 2022. Steckley spoke to *Academic Matters* about the lessons of these experiences, how digital and in-person learning can be reimagined in the future, and new avenues for international engagement and research.

Academic Matters: What was it like to transition your experiential learning courses online during COVID?



Marylynn Steckley: I offered Carleton's first on-campus international experiential learning course in 2017, a couple of years before COVID-19, with no indication that we would ever be going fully virtual. I developed a course for students to do e-internships with Cuso International, a development organization that matches volunteers with organizations and community partners around the world. Students at Carleton have to complete an international experience as part of their Global and International Studies degree, and this class was the way we could fulfill the University's requirement with an on-campus option. We had an in-person component where we brainstormed, crafted our own class manifesto, did workshops on writing for NGOs, effective punchy communication, and I helped them with their research in class. We connected virtually on Skype with Cuso and our partner organizations. I was fortunate that when COVID-19 hit, I had already done this international experiential learning course, and some other online teaching, so the pivot was not as big for me.

AM: How did you apply your knowledge from the e-volunteering course to a fully remote course?

Steckley: I started teaching a class called "Craft: A Global Social Relations" in the fall of 2020, and that shift to a fully remote course during COVID sparked a new awareness in me about the importance of student mental health and teaching the *whole* student. Everyone's mental health crashed during COVID, and my perception was that a lot of faculty members struggled to gauge what the workload for students would look like when fully online. Students shared with me that spending 40 to 60 hours a week staring at a screen impacted their retention, their feeling of motivation, and their mental health.

This course was my first iteration of trying to figure out how I could teach the whole student and not just get material into their brain. I read Glenn Adamson's book *Craft: An American History,* and it sparked the idea that I would be able to look at craft as a global "social relation," investigating how "craft"—pottery, painting, design—can be unpacked to reveal hidden human connections, histories of exploitation, and meaning. I had this idea that we could connect with makers and artists all over the world, without needing to be physically together, because that was also happening in unique and different ways online. In this class, we started the day with what I called "global mental health embodiment activities," borrowed from different mental health practices around the world. We did video Tai Chi, for example, together one morning. We did a Finnish "sisu" cold shower, where we all ran to our showers and had a cold shower for as long as we could handle it. Then we had a more traditional conversation about the class readings, and then a workshop. The part I'm really proud of was the connections we made between readings that explored the class, race, gender, and environmental relations that are embedded in a specific craft and then an experiential learning workshop with a leader from a different place around the world who led us in that same craft practice. For example, we learned Brazilian capoeira (a martial art combining dance, acrobatics, music, and spirituality) and learned about the legacy of slavery and how it's linked to the dance form. We did Chinese paper-cutting, and learned about the connections between paper-cutting, class, and nationalism, and, we even made sushi, and learned about the environmental implications of sushi going global.

In the afternoon, we had reflection time where we would connect, again, with a global activity. We did a footbath one day, and another day we did a community walk where everybody went out into their community and picked up garbage while we talked to a partner. I saw that we could really make it work, doing very active, participatory things while learning online.

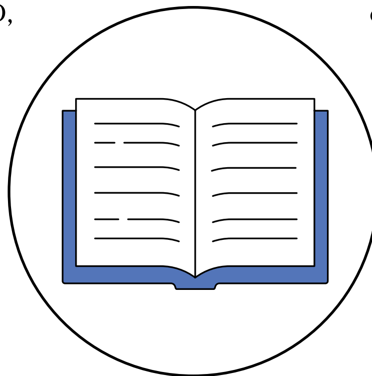
AM: How has your approach to community-based research changed as you learn more about virtual learning and engagement?

Steckley: My research is community-based, and I try hard to engage students in my research, internationally and in Canada. I'm currently working on a project related to food justice and food sovereignty in Haiti, and I was able to help send one of my undergraduate students—who is writing their Honours research paper on a similar subject—to Haiti last year to conduct field research with a women-led nutrition and education center. Community-engaged work is such a gift for faculty, and we can engage students in this work in

Community-engaged work is such a gift for faculty, and we can engage students in this work in really meaningful ways.

really meaningful ways. I think blurring the lines between research and teaching is one way that we can be innovative as faculty, and I'm proud of that part of my work. Students can get any information online, but it makes me feel good to connect students to my research because it offers a different experience than what happens in a lecture.

Before things reopened in Haiti, our team did some online interviews with community partners on the ground. There were two lessons that came out of that experience for me. In addition to COVID, there was a major fuel crisis at the time and a lot of unrest that made domestic travel difficult. To do our interviews, we had to arrange to bring our interviewee guest to a hotel that had stable internet and electricity. It sometimes didn't work, but often it did. That alone was amazing because it didn't seem possible at first. We saved a lot of carbon emissions that way—no flights!



It was also sometimes totally frustrating because people got stuck in traffic on their way to the interview, some didn't have money or access to fuel to travel to the interview location, or the internet just went down. It helped me realize that there is another layer of equity to all of these interactions with such socio-economic distance between places. Even when we're connecting virtually and some barriers are lowered, we have to think about who we have access to for research and who students will meet when going abroad. We have to be cognizant that equity is not a game of checking a box.

AM: What were some of the challenges you've encountered while developing these virtual methods for engagement, teaching, and research?

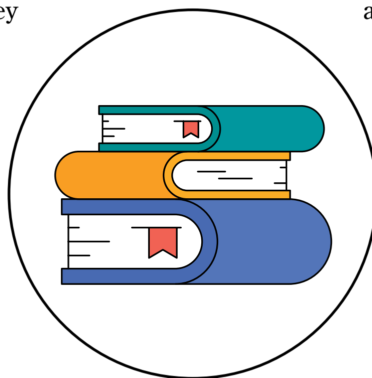
Steckley: One of the tensions for Global and International Studies experiential learning programs is that they have historically been based on the traditional model of sending young people overseas where they do something "good" and feel good about themselves. The reality is that the people who can take the opportunity to engage in higher education in Canada tend to skew white and wealthy. Those disparities trickle into the international learning opportunities, which skew even more heavily towards privileged groups because they tend to be student-funded.

In my e-volunteering course, I did research and collected data on the course and its students and found that it was a catch-basin for students from equity-seeking groups—students with a disability, a mental health concern, racialized, working-class students. I think part of my approach for the "Craft" course came out of trying to figure out a way to build justice into our international experiential learning requirements, because [the disparity] is not fair. My realization of that unfairness in my own program made me realize how systemic the problem is across Canada, where there are international experience degree requirements, and some students will not be able to afford them. It was painful to me to participate in that without challenging it and without

I worry that moving out of COVID has increased a stigma against virtual work and virtual experiential learning in academia.

finding other opportunities that would be just as good and meaningful for students.

I worry that moving out of COVID has increased a stigma against virtual work and virtual experiential learning in academia, and that will mean that we're not going to value students' work as much if they have a virtual internship instead of an in-person one. Now we're all being pushed back to in-person learning under the blanket statement that togetherness means physical togetherness and that learning is better when it's in person. I really question that concept. I fear that that's going to deepen the inequality for equity-seeking groups at universities.



Another challenge for faculty members is that right now, there is no institutional recognition or credit for those kinds of undertakings, beyond awards. This is onerous in terms of time and labour—setting things up, working with the student, and working with the community partners. Many faculty can't do that, because of the work required and the lack of recognition. It ends up being a labour of love.

AM: What do you hope for international experience courses like yours going forward?

Steckley: I envisioned and created the "Craft" course as an immersive experience. We spent the whole day together, in a way to mimic short-term experiences where students go abroad and spend a lot of time together and with the instructor doing different activities. I fear that there's too much pressure to go back in person—and generally to do things as they have been done, and a course like mine would be stuck in a week-to-week, traditional lecture class format. That's one restriction that exists at a university, but there is a gap between faculty wanting to be innovative and the "business as usual" mindset that is enlivened now with the return to campus.

But if we don't innovate, adapt, change, grow, and learn as educators, we're dead at the door. If we're serious about equity-driven pedagogy, and climate justice on our campuses, we will have to be teaching the whole person, which means we need different options. Some students definitely will want to come in person, and the same is true for faculty. But others prefer to work online or in a hybrid format.

I'm a geographer by training, and one of the things that's important to me is figuring out how we can operationalize climate justice on campuses. I think that means that all of us in our programs should be trying to do whatever we can to reduce our carbon footprint. And if I, as a total non-artist and not very creative person, could organize this course on craft and do it the way I did with students who loved it, there's so much potential for other ways to use virtual learning that is going to really lower our carbon footprint. I think we should be pursuing those actively and meaningfully. AM

Marylynn Steckley is an Assistant Professor in the Bachelor of Global and International Studies program at Carleton University.

This interview was condensed and edited for clarity and length.

Supporting research communications in challenging times

Amanda Clarke, Howard Ramos, and Julia M. Wright

Academics are encouraged to share their research with the public, but amid reports of harassment of experts online, the rules of engagement are murky. How can scholars protect themselves and what recourse do they have when things go wrong?

Academic institutions have been too slow in adapting to new realities, risks, and consequences of the digital transformation of academic work.

The openness of the digital environment makes online engagement attractive because it is a relatively cheap and easy way for scholars to extend the reach of their research. But this openness also creates new vulnerabilities for scholars. It's time for the research community to look carefully at this landscape and take steps to support safe, effective, and meaningful public engagement.

In "Protecting Expert Advice for the Public", our peer-reviewed Royal Society of Canada policy briefing, co-authored with our colleagues Wendy Chun and Matthew Herder, we tackle the escalating problem of the harassment of researchers as a consequence of online and public knowledge mobilization. We recommend that the agencies and institutions responsible for research in Canada think urgently about how to ensure safe and effective public communication of scholarship; we argue for policies to support those in extreme situations, particularly scholars threatened with violence. Our recommendations are in stark contrast to the widespread laissez-faire attitude in which such communication is assumed to just happen—a view that presumes the costs suffered by researchers wading into public debate is simply unavoidable or inconsequential.

What do researchers face now?

Academic institutions have been too slow in adapting to new realities, risks, and consequences of the digital transformation of academic work. Postsecondary institutions are still carved up into bureaucratic silos largely inherited from the days when they were only bricks-and-mortar. Now, academics and other researchers work in both physical and digital spaces, from learning management systems to videoconferencing to e-mails, websites, social media, and electronic publications.

This opens up enormous possibilities for enhancing accessibility and broadens the audiences who engage with research, but it also means that toxic activity can easily spread from social media to e-mail, and leap into the physical world. For instance, doxxing (in which contact information, such as a home address or phone number, is posted online) often leads to offline harassment (such as so-called "SLAPP" lawsuits aiming to unjustifiably censor researchers, phone calls to an employer, or contact at a scholar's home or office). These targeted attacks are not evenly distributed. Online harassment particularly affects people of colour, members of the LGBTQ+ community, women, and other traditionally marginalized populations. It also disproportionately affects scholars in fields and disciplines that intersect with polarizing public discourses, from climate change and vaccination to equity, diversity, and inclusion itself.

The safe and effective communication of research results and expertise is not a fringe issue. It speaks, fundamentally, to workplace safety in the digital age and to the public role of our postsecondary institutions. Our brief encourages administrators, faculty members, and research offices to evaluate how they incentivize and support public knowledge sharing. This must include a careful assessment of the risks that are attached to public-facing work and action to mitigate them. There is no one-size-fits-all solution here because postsecondary institutions are variously shaped by legislation, collective agreements, academic norms, and institutional histories. It is imperative, however, that institutions move beyond their bureaucratic silos to collaborate and coordinate solutions that are as fluid and flexible as the digital space requires.

Effective support for research communications

Done well, sharing research beyond books and paywalled academic journals, academic conferences, and colloquia can produce a range of welcome outcomes. Publicly focused research communication can enrich public discourse, nurture lifelong learning and curiosity, support the work of decision-makers in government, civil society organizations, and industry, and tackle mis- and dis-information. It can also provide opportunities for scholars to engage with viewpoints and approaches outside the so-called "ivory tower."

Funding bodies, governments, postsecondary institutions, and even faculty involved in hiring and promotions processes now reward scholars for sharing their research with the public at large. Yet we lack even a single term for it. "Knowledge mobilization," "knowledge dissemination," "knowledge translation," "knowledge transfer," and "outreach" are all loosely interchangeable. More importantly, one of the pernicious elements of "knowledge mobilization" discourse is the uncritical opposition between "researchers" and "the public." The researcher/public binary reinforces the perception of elitism that can impede multilateral and respectful conversations.

Such oversimplifications of researcher and public relationships are a symptom of the lack of open, thoughtful, and critical conversations that would help concretely define the specific objectives of sharing research knowledge in Canada and best practices for achieving it. A more nuanced approach would recognize that researchers are part of the public and belong to non-academic communities, from neighbourhoods to Facebook groups.

We recommend that postsecondary institutions reflect on their existing frameworks by asking a series of critical and reflexive questions to address these problems. What have researchers learned over the last two decades about strategies that work and strategies that fail? How much time and what supports do different strategies require? Doing so will produce a more robust, concrete, and nuanced framework for knowledge mobilization.

Addressing these issues will help protect scholars from the harms they can face when they engage with the public. Our brief suggests that, without an evidence-based framework for supporting researchers, it is too easy to slide into the well-worn groove of the dominant commercial model of digital engagement. The "attention economy" encourages vanity metrics: the counting of clicks rather than more substantive and context-sensitive considerations that would promote thoughtful, collaborative, and respectful listening, learning, and disagreement. It also leaves scholars dependent on algorithm-driven flows of content and vulnerable to harassment, racism, misogyny, and other forms of hate.

More rigor, less rancour

Institutions can do more to encourage researchers to turn to longer-standing traditions such as community-engaged research, the open science movement, and co-production/co-creation. These approaches to research dissemination and public engagement also challenge the elitist "ivory tower" stereotype and prioritize scholarly engagement with the public and decision-makers—all noble goals of knowledge mobilization—but they are rooted in humility, collaboration, and listening. They need not require researchers to make themselves vulnerable in fast-paced, typically adversarial online environments. There are "quieter" forms of public engagement that can have just as much value, or more, than the forms that are too often unreflectively prioritized in views of public engagement. Acting more locally, through meetings with policymakers and advocacy groups to share research findings, giving talks in community settings, or writing documents that translate research findings into accessible forms (briefings, op-eds, and articles for non-academic media) can be more generative and less combative than social media outreach.

What have researchers learned over the last two decades about strategies that work and strategies that fail? How much time and what supports do different strategies require?

Institutions could support public policy by helping to build structures that regularize quick government-academic collaboration and engagement. This tradition has faded in Canada in the past two decades as a feature of federal policy-making, even as in-house research capacity has declined in government. Convergence research, a recent movement to recognize the value of broadly multidisciplinary collaborations, could even yield new benefits to policymakers.

Importantly, these kinds of activities can give researchers, and those they engage with, more control over venue, tone, and style of engagement, and might provide less intimidating and risky contexts for research dissemination. This is particularly important for populations that we know are more likely to be targeted and harassed in open, anonymous online spaces. Concretely, this might mean providing guidance to tenure and promotion committees, research administrators, and directly to researchers (including students) to ensure they know a wide range of ways to disseminate the findings of research with the broader public. More can be done by postsecondary institutions to ensure that it is clear that career success does not require scholars to participate in spaces that threaten their security and sense of well-being, or to risk oversimplifying or otherwise distorting the information that they share. It is also important to recognize that public engagement on some topics may not always be beneficial enough to be worth the time or risk.

The risks and rewards of research dissemination are not inevitably yoked together, and it is possible through better supports to enhance the rewards and reduce the risks.

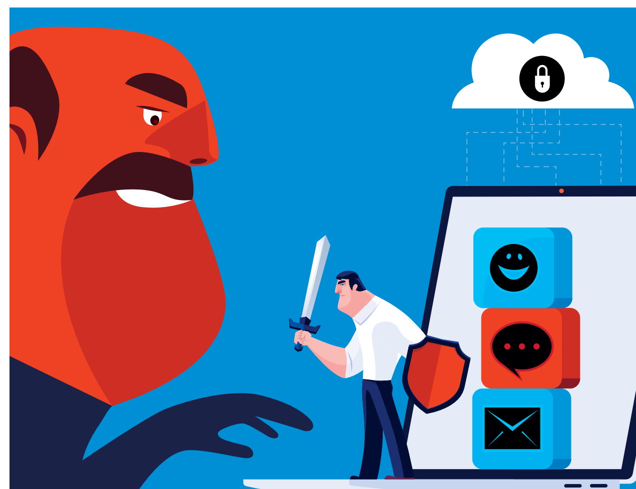
Using coordinated action to address online harassment

What happens if researchers are threatened? Too often, scholars don't know where to go for help at their institutions or are directed to one office after another when they try to find it. The bricks-and-mortar structures of our institutions are ill-equipped for the kind of collaboration and coordination necessary to deal with threats that can migrate back and forth between digital and physical forms. The historically shaped complexity and rigidity of our postsecondary institutions has created a significant barrier to addressing the very real vulnerability of Canadian researchers, including those without even the protections of tenure, such as contingent faculty, post-doctoral fellows, and students.

Universities and colleges consist of a number of quasi-independent faculties and disciplines but also a range of offices that oversee the various functions that serve students, staff, faculty, and administrators. These functions are segregated by their objectives. Buildings fall under facilities management, money under financial services, media under communications, courses and degrees under the registrar's office, and so on. These siloed institutions can be conceptually resistant to contemporary forms of harassment which flow across such categories or evade them entirely. For instance, a harasser who cannot be identified as staff, faculty, or a student may be seen as falling outside of the different units in an organization and therefore unmanageable by policies and office mandates. Too often researchers are sent to security to be turned away and sent to IT and then turned away back to security, all the while facing ongoing harassment, stress, and intimidation.

Canadian postsecondary institutions also fall under multiple jurisdictions of responsibility. These include provinces that are, under constitutional division of powers, responsible for education, but also the federal government that funds research through the Tri-Agency and offers support and policy guidance through other various agencies and departments.

The structural complexity of institutions of higher education has led scholars such as Kerri-Lee Krause to conclude



Online harassment shows how the higher education sector's lack of coordination can lead to contradictions and gaps that create serious vulnerabilities for those who are part of them.

that they produce "wicked problems." These are problems that span multiple silos or jurisdictions and cannot be easily resolved. For example, as administrative units become larger and responsibilities more diffuse, new problems fall outside of the work and attention of existing units. Instead of adapting to address them, many retreat to the defined space of their work, again leading to new problems falling through the cracks of the existing system. As time passes, the gaps become institutionalized and problems persist and even metastasize into wicked problems.

Wicked problems are seemingly difficult or impossible to solve because of their perceived complexity and the interlocking and often contradictory systems that are engaged to solve them. Because of this, they have no clear or single solution. Wicked problems also become more difficult to tackle as systems become increasingly complex and in turn become primed to fracture. More silos in a system also lead to more inertia and inward thinking, intensifying contradictions and making problems increasingly wicked. This leads to policy and practice gaps that let social problems linger and remain unaddressed. Interdepartmental collaboration and coordination is needed to tame such problems.

The weakness of the current response to the online harassment of researchers is recognizable as an example of a wicked problem created by the complexity of higher educational institutions as systems. Online harassment shows how the higher education sector's lack of coordination can lead to contradictions and gaps that create serious vulnerabilities for those who are part of them. The global scale of social media can make the problem seem especially wicked, but it does not prevent institutions from acting to ameliorate the damage. They can start by taking down the conceptual walls that inhibit solutions to the risks and harms of an increasingly fluid digital realm. Campus safety committees, for example, are typically concerned only with physical threats. We have protocols for safety in labs—why not for webinars and social media?

"Grand solutions" usually do not solve wicked problems. Instead, modular approaches that are incremental and focused can lead to change in complex systems. Put simply, if people in units simply began to tackle the problem, it could become increasingly solvable. Leadership, clear policy, and coordination can drive the change that is needed to protect expert advice.

It will be key to create a set of ordering principles that guide people through problems that facilitate action and resolution of a crisis. These principles could explicitly address researcher safety while also supporting institutions' efforts to have greater societal impact through public research dissemination. Leadership from the research councils and other national bodies such as Universities Canada and Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) will be crucial, but it is also vital for senior leadership within institutions to highlight the need for coordination to tackle harassment. In particular, steady communication and easily accessible documentation are crucial to ensuring that policies, once implemented, are usable and readily updated as digital cultures and technologies continue to evolve.

Put simply, if people in units simply began to tackle the problem, it could become increasingly solvable.

The value of transparency

Postsecondary institutions could also proactively address the erosion of public confidence in research that facilitates misinformation, disinformation, and the targeting of scholars. A report on "Mis- and Disinformation during the 2021 Canadian Federal Election" finds that "distrust of experts and intellectuals… is one of the strongest predictors of beliefs in misinformation." This is especially concerning since trust in "academic expert[s]" is declining in Canada, according to the 2021 Edelman Trust Barometer. And as the International Association for Media and Communication Research noted in 2018, disinformation can also rely on representing "scholarly research as mere 'opinion'", a misperception shared by 43 per cent of Canadians in a poll reported by the CBC in 2017.

At the same time, the wider availability of scholarship online and the greater financial vulnerability of institutions contribute to the longstanding problem of trying to silence scholarship through flak, as persistent negative remarks that undermine confidence without evidence. Scholars and topics that run counter to misogynist and racist views, or particular state or corporate interests, are more likely to be targeted. Such attacks interfere with robust oversight of research communication at its source and so undermine trust if it appears that scholarship is suppressed or publicized for reasons other than quality.

Although very different problems, misinformation and flak both exhibit a lack of awareness of core academic principles—the principles that ensure that academic work

can be trusted. One of our brief's recommendations offered a cheap and straightforward way of countering this lack of awareness: tell people. Postsecondary institutions and the research community have many mechanisms for ensuring the quality of research and academic programs. Doing more to be transparent about how scholars' research is tested for credibility is a strategy supported by evidence. According to a 2013 article by Stephan Lewandowsky, Gilles Gignac, and Samuel Vaughan, "highlighting a scientific consensus when communicating scientific facts" can advance "acceptance of science." The media are also following this approach when they highlight the tentativeness of preprints in academic journals.

Our brief therefore recommends that each institution develop their own webpage with brief information about quality-control processes from tenure and promotion to peer review and external reviews of programs. Such a resource could readily be created and posted by the administration, the senate or equivalent, the faculty association, or, even better, collaboratively among them. This would help those in and beyond the institution to be better informed about the extensive work done to protect the quality of research and expertise. This understanding is critical to supporting informed public engagement with scholarship and may mitigate the vitriol and slurs that feed on the misrepresentation of peer-reviewed research as mere "opinion."

To the right is an illustration of what such a page might look like, with each link opening out to a short statement (say, 50-75 words). The wording would need to change, institution to institution. But it would be easy to produce pages like this for Canadian postsecondary institutions, especially given existing resources that already provide institution-specific wording (such as conflict-of-interest policies).

The aim here is achievable steps towards improving the current situation. Such a resource can help to rebuild public trust in academic research and institutions. Indeed, it's remarkable that postsecondary institutions do not already make this sort of information clearly available. These processes are not perfect, but, along with the complex mechanisms of academic consensus-building, they get us significantly closer to reliable information than mere "opinion."

Disinformation, political pressures, and other forces that drive the targeted harassment of scholars will not go away. The risks are real and immediate. In the starkest of terms, we cannot throw scholars on controversial subjects or from historically under-represented groups to the online wolves. And yet, we must equally acknowledge that it is not in the public interest for scholars to retreat into ivory towers and ignore the very real public need for expert advice. In striking this balance, there are steps institutions can take—collaboratively, relatively cheaply, and immediately—to make expert communications more effective and safer. These measures will not eliminate the problem, of course, but we cannot let perfection be the enemy of good. The postsecondary sector can build on the evidence that is now available to take valuable steps towards building respectful, safe pathways for sharing research and expertise to support productive public debate and exchange in Canada. AM

FAQ on Academic Oversight

Research

- What is "peer review"?
- Is peer review just for research publications?
- What is ethics review?
- What about conflict of interest?

Teaching

- How do you evaluate teaching?
- What's a Senate review of an academic program?
- What does accreditation mean?

Employment

- What kinds of academic jobs are there (tenured/untenured, part-time, teaching assistants, research assistants?
- How do you decide who gets tenure?
- What is academic freedom and why is it protected?
- Are professors and teaching assistants unionized?

Amanda Clarke is an Associate Professor in the School of Public Policy & Administration at Carleton University.

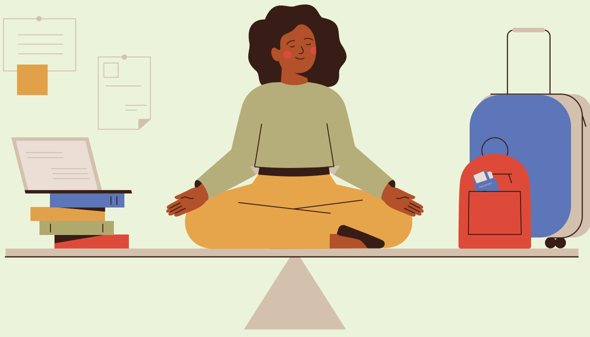
Howard Ramos is a Professor in the Department of Sociology at Western University.

Julia M. Wright is George Munro Chair in Literature and Rhetoric in the Department of English at Dalhousie University.

Finding space for life outside the ivory tower with *Academic Aunties*

Ethel Tungohan, Harshita Yalamarty, and Genevieve Fuji Johnson

How can academics create community for themselves and others? How does that quest intersect with community-based research? Tungohan, host of the *Academic Aunties* podcast, talks to guests about the value of hobbies, activities, and skills beyond work.



By claiming our identities outside the academy, we pushed back against toxic academic work culture that venerates "productivity" above everything else.

The podcast *Academic Aunties,* produced by Ethel Tungohan, Wayne Chu, and Nisha Nath, centres the importance of community in academia. Created in March 2021 during the pandemic, the podcast was a way for us as producers and our guests—most of whom are women of colour and first-generation scholars—to have frank discussions about the academy's "hidden curriculum."

In close to 40 episodes recorded over three seasons, guests have talked about topics including what *really* happens when academic job search committees deliberate, racial microaggressions experienced by women of colour, parenting challenges for academics, and income precarity for contract academic staff and faculty. The core tenet of the podcast—take care, be kind to yourself, and don't be an a**hole—is born out of the conviction that academia's tendency to prioritize individual markers of professional success at the expense of people's health and well-being, their communities and their families, and personal lives, is corrosive.

Ultimately, *Academic Aunties* challenges listeners to build "dissident friendships" (to quote from the title of Elora Halim Chowdhury and Liz Philipose's landmark 2016 edited collection). Dissident friends provide support, bear witness to each other's journeys, and set the foundation for acts of resistance to academia's many inequities.

Finding yourself outside of work is one such act of resistance. In the episode entitled "#MoreThanWork," we, the authors of this piece, addressed the need to fight against the belief that academia should define *all* facets of our lives. By claiming our identities outside the academy, we pushed back against toxic academic work culture that venerates "productivity" above everything else. In our conversation, we defined who we are outside our day jobs as university professors, delving into activities such as boxing, surfing, and playing Dungeons and Dragons.

In this episode, we discussed what inspired us to pursue these activities, and what they mean to us. Academia can so often be isolating, competitive, and heartbreaking; it demands that we are efficient, productive, and the "best" at what we do. Being "more than work" is important to our mental and physical health, as well as our creativity and capability in facing academic challenges. By engaging our bodies and muscles, in nature or in our imagination, we nourish different aspects of ourselves with others who share in that creative pursuit. We talked about the necessity of unplugging and recharging, and about the joys of experimenting and failing. We shared our thoughts on how liberating it can be to participate and learn in these communities far away from the university. After all, academia is just a job.

Parts of our conversation are reproduced below, edited for clarity:

Ethel Tungohan: How many times have we seen colleagues congratulated for working during their vacations and for publishing and writing while on leave? Or how many times have we received emails about department politics or service obligations in the middle of the night or on the weekend or holidays? This is why it's so important to try and find something outside of academia. So, on today's episode, we want to talk about all the ways that we can be more than work. We've got my good friends, Dr. Harshita Yalamarty and Dr. Genevieve Fuji Johnson.

Harshita Yalamarty: Hi, I'm Harshita. I am a newly minted PhD and I'm currently teaching at Saint Mary's University, Halifax. I dabble in many different things. I bake, I do origami, play Dungeons and Dragons and other role-playing games, and play other board games.

Genevieve Fuji Johnson: I'm Genevieve, and I'm based out here on the west coast of Turtle Island. I'm a professor at Simon Fraser University. Who am I outside academia? For me, the boundaries are really permeable. I do identify as a scholar, and we'll talk more about the perils and pitfalls of that totalizing identity. But who I am inside and outside academia are the same. One feeds the other. In the professional context, as racialized women we're constantly being bombarded with the aggression, right? As Joyce Green says, we have to have our elbows up. When I am in the water, surfing with others, it can be very intense and, at times, it can be aggressive. But typically, the vibe is pretty mellow. It's pretty laid back and that's who I become.

Ethel: I think that's one thing that I love about boxing, cuz when I go to the boxing gym, no one [cares] about my publications or my work or who I am. And it's a different vibe. It's a supportive vibe. It's a kinder vibe. We give each other

fist bumps, you know, and it's not about hierarchy. It's just about fun and joy. I think having these alternate spaces outside the academy is so crucial to me feeling that I'm tethered to something bigger.

Harshita: My recent passion is playing Dungeons and Dragons, which is a tabletop role-playing game. I got into it over the pandemic and found that it was engaging a creative, collaborative, storytelling part of me that was really precious and valuable at that time. Basically, you create a character and go into a fantasy world, and there's a game master who creates the worlds, sets the rules, and sets challenges. But as players, you have to work collaboratively. You have to tell stories, make decisions, and you have to roll the dice and whatever number comes up on it kind of determines whether your actions are successful or not, and whether you can swing a sword or not and things like that. I found that in the collaborative space of role playing, no one cares if you're smart or not. Within that community, you are relating to each other as people engaging in theatre of the mind together. As much as we battle dragons and explore dungeons, there's also times where we all end up in a tavern together and we are drinking mead and rolling the dice to jump up on a table and start dancing. So, it's a really lovely… explosion of creative energy together, which is very different sometimes from academia and what it offers.

Ethel: One epiphany I had as you were talking is that… when I started boxing it was right before I turned 40. It was my mode of resisting the intense stress I was feeling in my hyper-competitive academic world. It seems as though all of us, in different ways, were trying to carve out a different space and we were trying to kind of resist popular understandings of what proper academics should look like. What's interesting is that a lot of people that I've talked to seem ashamed to kind of admit their immersion in these non-academic worlds, right?

Harshita: I think when I got into the research life, I struggled very much against this idea that to be a good academic, I have to read everything all the time. And I just… I don't do that. I read fiction. I read a lot of sci-fi and fantasy. I watch a lot of bad reality TV. These are things we do for fun, to recharge, and we're not always critical and analytical all of the time!

Genevieve: One of the issues in academia is this emphasis on the life of the mind. It's a beautiful thing, but it's also really problematic, especially when the mind is prioritized over the body. Coming to an activity like surfing, which is totalizing in its own way, you need to be really, really with it. You need to be fully present. Often, you're getting tossed around by the current, by the white water of the breaking waves. It can be a struggle, especially on a bigger board, to make it through those breaking waves and into the green water. To do all of this necessarily requires letting go of all of the other stressors in your life, and really just focusing on the task at hand, which is making it out to the relative calm of the green water. There is something purely fun about being able to see a good wave, to get onto it in good position, and to ride it. It's pure joy.

Having these alternate spaces outside the academy is so crucial to me feeling that I'm tethered to something bigger.

Ethel: I think one of the most common pushbacks I receive from folks is how people simply don't have time or they don't think they have time. What would you say to folks who kind of resist this imperative, who think that they cannot actually spend time doing fun things because of the pressures that they feel?

Harshita: Those of us who are in this position as PhDs, we're already pretty shiny, we're super good at what we do. And there's so much pressure to keep being good. But the question of not having the time or how do we prioritize doing something creative or something outside of academia while being in this precarious position? I think for me, this speaks to the question of mental health. The stress on our bodies is unsustainable, but the stress on our mental health is also unsustainable because academia, as we know, can break your heart with the microaggressions, the everyday injustices for women, racialized women, for racialized non-binary folks. So, it's important to recharge.

Genevieve: We *have* to be efficient with our time. We *have* to be productive… I want to resist that. I love writing, I love researching, I love engaging with people on ideas. But it gets overwhelming, and I come up against these dead ends in my own thinking. To be able to disengage from that and to get into the water for a surf, I have these moments where I shift my perspective and see a problem in a more creative way.

Ethel: If there's one thing that you take away from this conversation, it's this: you should not be ashamed for having non-academic pursuits. We are all more than work.

When reflecting on ways to establish ourselves as #morethanwork, we suggest that being part of communities outside academia brings deep gratification and joy. Whether

We are all more than work.

through boxing, surfing, Dungeons and Dragons, and ukulele lessons, pursuing activities that are not tied to expectations of academic "merit" is liberating. Being immersed in an engaging activity, and being supported by a larger community is a subversive antidote to competitive academic environments. And it's so necessary for our health and wellbeing.

We encourage people to experiment! Trying to find an identity outside of being an academic can be difficult. But all of us were kids once, so we know what play is and how rewarding it feels. Rediscovering beloved old hobbies or experimenting in new ones with no pressure to be "good" at them, can ease yourself into being more than work. As professors, university and college teachers, administrators, and specialized researchers, the joy of being a student again, learning something new, and allowing yourself to fail is a valuable experience that can be life changing. A different kind of community-building is possible when you are a beginner or a novice, and you can share your journey of discovery and learning with others like you. Give yourself this gift. AM

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Harshita Yalamarty is an Assistant Professor of Women and Gender Studies at Saint Mary's University, Halifax (K'jipuktuk).

Genevieve Fuji Johnson is a Professor in Political Science at Simon Fraser University.

10 YEARS

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UNCERTAIN HARVEST — THE FUTURE OF FOOD ON A WARMING PLANET — IAN MOSBY, SARAH ROTZ, AND EVAN D.G. FRASER
WHERE ONCE THEY STOOD — NEWFOUNDLAND'S ROCKY ROAD TOWARDS CONFEDERATION — RAYMOND B. BLAKE, MELVIN BAKER
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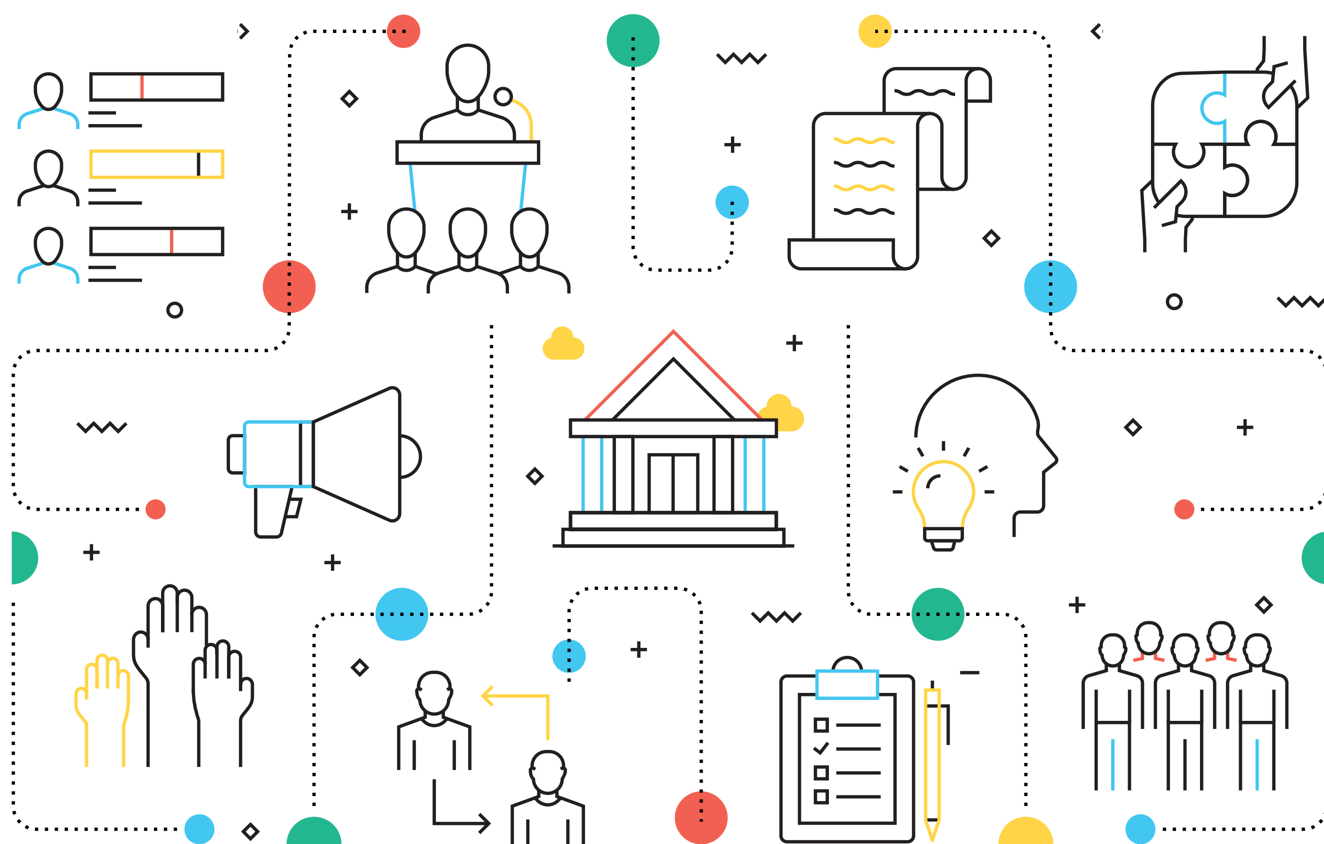
COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION IN SUPPORT OF CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS: Reflections on the process

David Heap



Mobilizing in support of bargaining requires endurance, openness, and coalition building. What steps can faculty associations take to create connections among their members and between groups on and off campus?

By the time the University of Western Ontario Faculty Association (UWOFA) held a successful strike vote in September 2022 and set a strike deadline in November, much of the groundwork had been laid for a successful outcome to collective bargaining. With the benefit of experience and some new skills, we were ready to scale up our mobilization efforts to support our bargaining team with a multi-faceted community of faculty, students, labour leaders, and other allies.

Had we tried to "go it alone", the absence of visible support would have hampered our bargaining team's efforts at the table. Together, we could show the extent of our strength.

Experience

Experience had taught us in previous rounds that preparing well in advance is a key element of success in negotiation. UWOFA policy calls for a Strike Action Committee to be formed in May of a bargaining year, with two Co-Chairs and various subcommittees that we began to populate as we planned and started searching for a strike headquarters to rent off campus. Eventually, all these subcommittees involved a total of about 40 members who met with increasing frequency throughout the process. During our planning meetings and subcommittee work, we relied on our detailed Strike Manual. This document is the fruit of strike preparation groundwork laid in support of bargaining in 2010, 2014, and 2018: our union has learned that involving many members in this process builds the power needed to support the work of our negotiating team.

New skills

In addition to the lessons we brought from past experience, we also added new skills to our toolbox. Significantly, at the suggestion of OCUFA's Membership Engagement and Campaigns Coordinator Jordyn Perreault-Laird, about 18 of us from UWOFA (including two of our CUPE employees) took a six-week Organizing for Power training through the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation. There, we learned how effective one-to-one conversations with co-workers can help build networks that lead to union victories. UWOFA's Board, Negotiating Committee, and Collective Bargaining Committee also participated in Countdown to Strong training with OCUFA which helped bolster our outreach strategy.

Another aspect of our work in 2022 which differed from all previous rounds of bargaining was of course the re-learning curve we all face as we return to doing organizing activities in person, while conducting most of our Strike Action Committee planning online via Zoom.

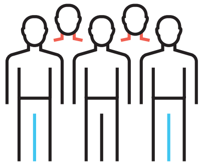
Solidarity connections

Although our union is not affiliated with the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) or the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), we have for some time maintained regular contact with the London and District Labour Council (LDLC). As UWOFA's official observer, I have attended LDLC monthly meeting for many years, becoming familiar with many local union delegates at these Council meetings, on their picket lines and at community events. As in previous years, UWOFA was part of the LDLC's Labour Day picnic in September 2022.

So when we announced that we were holding a strike vote in September, beginning conciliation, and then setting a November strike deadline, local LDLC affiliates were ready to respond in solidarity. Not only did they share our online support letter campaign with their members and on their social media channels, unions such at the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 741 made it clear that their bus-driving members would honour our picket lines, meaning that in the event of a strike, UWO students would have to walk from bus stops relocated on the periphery of campus.

OPSEU Local 110, the Fanshawe College Faculty Union, who had seen UWOFA members join their picket lines during two strikes in recent decades, provided experienced volunteers who helped train our picket captains. Training events were well publicized on UWOFA's social media, signaling our strike readiness to our membership, our Employer, our students, and the community, including other unions on campus.

Having the support of other unions, both on and off campus, is of course crucial. Not only does it show our employer that UWOFA does not stand alone in our demands for a fair settlement, it signals to our members, our students, and the broader community that university faculty are part of the labour movement in London. We also had solidarity from faculty at other Ontario universities, who supported our email campaigns and amplified our messages online. Had we



Some of the lessons that we take away from this round of bargaining simply reinforce our prior experiences: it is important to start early and engage many members in strike preparations.

tried to "go it alone", the absence of visible support would have hampered our bargaining team's efforts at the table. Together, we could show the extent of our strength.

Visibility

The more we make our mobilization efforts visible, the more they effectively support our union's bargaining in the interests of our members. On our campus, visibility required taking every opportunity to show how our strike preparations were progressing. This rising mobilization took the form of a poster campaigns on members' office doors and departmental bulletin boards, while leafleting at campus bus-stops to invite students and others to participate in our email campaign, where members and others sent messages to key decision-makers within the Western administration urging them to negotiate a fair agreement which addressed our demands As the strike deadline drew nearer, students began joining in these leafleting and postering efforts. Off campus, we raised the visibility of our strike preparations with an opening of our Strike HQ that happened to fall on October 31. Members were invited to visit our HQ (with or without kids) to pick up treats and UWOFA swag as well as union posters. The occasion was promoted with Hallowe'en themed social media posts with messages relating to bargaining priorities.

One of our Strike Services subcommittees focuses on Socials and Morale, which is mandated by UWOFA's Strike Manual to organize social events in the event of a strike, as well as music for picket lines. The chair of this subcommittee chair is one of the leaders of a community samba rhythm marching band (the Action Beats Collective, loosely based on the international Rhythms of Resistance network) which we had seen at Earth Day and May Day earlier in 2022. Initially, a few members planned to boost morale by drumming at picket lines, but that plan quickly morphed into a drumming picket of its own as they attracted more members interested in drumming for our union and for other community causes. This UWOFA Beats Collective appeared at our strike HQ rallies and social events leading up to our strike deadline. They also participated in community solidarity pickets in support of protests by education workers in the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)'s Ontario School Boards Council of Unions (OSBCU) that sprouted across Ontario in late October and early November 2022. Even when small in numbers, the presence of drummers flying UWOFA flags lifted the spirits of everyone who heard them, while showing the community that unionized Western faculty loudly and visibly supports our friends and allies in other education workers' unions.

Looking forward

While in the end our negotiating team came to a tentative agreement before our strike deadline, our union's readiness to strike was undoubtedly a key factor supporting this achievement. Some of the lessons that we take away from this round of bargaining simply reinforce our prior experiences: it is important to start early and engage many members in strike preparations. Our 2022 negotiations also taught us the importance of making connections with faculty association members on our campus, other unions, student groups, and the broader community, while boosting the visibility of our strike preparations.

The old adage that "negotiations never really end" seems particularly true this year, as the ratification of our tentative agreement was followed closely by the Ontario Court decision striking down Bill 124. Our Collective Agreement includes a "reopener" clause which we hope will bring our Employer back to the bargaining table with a mandate to renegotiate fair compensable freely, without the constraints of a law found unconstitutional by the Ontario Superior Court of Justice. Meanwhile, UWOFA's Librarians & Archivists bargaining unit is preparing to bargain a new Collective Agreement in the summer of 2023, and our LDLC allies are organizing around the OFL's "Enough is Enough" campaign. For all these efforts, visible—and invisible—community engagement will of course remain crucial, and the UWOFA Beats Collective continues to recruit new members and rehearse new rhythms. AM

David Heap is UWOFA's Mobilization Chair, a Trustee of the CAUT Defense Fund, and an Associate Professor of French Studies and Linguistics at Western University. He is grateful to his UWOFA colleagues Laura Cayen and Christy Sich for their work as 2022 Strike Action Committee Co-Chairs.

Diversifying Canada's oldest journalism school

Meral Jamal

In 2020, students and alumni at Carleton University's storied journalism school called out systemic racism and demanded change. Is the university doing the work?

This story originally appeared in This Magazine. *It was written with the financial support of the OCUFA Mark Rosenfeld Fellowship in Higher Education Journalism.*

In the summer of 2020, against the backdrop of a global pandemic, the world had its re-reckoning with racism, and so did the place where I studied, Carleton University's School of Journalism and Communication. It began when George Floyd, a Black American, died on May 25 of that year after being pinned to the ground by a white police officer in Minneapolis. Floyd's death propelled conversations about systemic and institutionalized racism around the world. At my school, these conversations led to "A Call to Action: Pushing for institutional change at Carleton University's School of Journalism."

Published by BIPOC students and alumni, the letter documents specific instances of racism they had experienced at the school and outlines 30 calls to action. Chief among these calls was one to diversify faculty. In the first call to action, students and alumni said the school must hire

more BIPOC faculty, specifically Black and Indigenous faculty, as well as collect and release demographic data, with a distinction between tenured and contract staff. Students and alumni said they created the calls to action, because, while consulted in the past through the school's Equity and Inclusion committee, created in 2019, "serious steps toward reform have not been shared with us or made public."

"Hiring practices have also not reflected changes that the school has expressed interest in making," they added. In one section of the letter, BIPOC students and alumni also anonymously shared anecdotal experiences within the program. It reflected the significance of having racialized faculty in the program, especially in permanent positions: for most racialized students and alumni, it was a matter of better education through greater representation.

"Before joining Carleton's journalism school, I asked a recently graduated white student about the racial makeup of the program's faculty," one of them recalled in the letter. "They asked me why on earth that mattered. This is why it matters." Students and alumni also shared the harm some of them experienced at the hands of existing faculty in the program, much of which was white until the calls to action were released. "A professor shouted a religious slur at me in an attempt to make a joke," one of them wrote in the letter. "Once, in a fourth-year Indigenous reporting class, the professor told me racism is simply not real and an excuse," another shared. "If you thought you saw something as racism or a source said something was due to racism, you're just not doing a good job as a journalist."

In the two years since the calls to action were released, the program has brought in almost a dozen sessional instructors of colour and three tenure-track faculty, including high-profile Black journalists Nana aba Duncan and Adrian Harewood. Tobin Ng, a Carleton journalism student entering their third year at the time, says the calls to action were created "out of that frustration." They elaborated that there "was this desire to just create a really comprehensive document that would basically outline all the things that students had been calling for again and again. There's the emotional labour of having to repeat [ourselves], and just demand the same things without seeing concrete results," they said.

Two years since they helped write the calls to action, Ng says the school's response to the letter, especially through the steps it has taken to diversify faculty in the program, has finally made them hopeful. "I think that the hiring of new faculty is a step towards allowing for things that will last long beyond my time or the time of the students who are involved in this work right now." Yet, much work remains. While the school has hired professors and instructors of colour, more change is needed to ensure that diverse faculty continue to join the program moving forward, and feel supported enough to stay and grow within it. Some steps the school is taking, in particular, involve rethinking the job of a journalism professor, creating opportunities for research and growth, and recognizing the contributions of both the students and alumni, as well as the new faculty of colour, through allyship and support.

Rethinking the job

Nana aba Duncan was sharing the job posting for a new chair at Carleton's journalism school when a colleague suggested she apply for it. Duncan, who had spent much of her career at the CBC and had been actively involved in various diversity efforts at the public broadcaster, was completing the William Southam Journalism Fellowship at the University of Toronto's Massey College at the time. Her research at Massey involved looking at the experiences of leaders of colour. She was interested in this topic in part because she'd never had the opportunity to work under a Black or racialized leader, and because she was looking to take on a leadership role herself.

"I was in this place of thinking about race and leadership and a move in my own career," Duncan recalls. "I was [also] in this place of making a change and thinking about journalism in a way that could just be better for those of us who come from underrepresented communities or misrepresented communities." After that nudge to apply for the Carty Chair in Diversity and Inclusion Studies, Duncan took a moment to pause. Then, she superimposed her personal mission "to help change the industry so that racialized journalists can feel like their perspectives and expertise are just as worthy and legitimate as the expertise and experiences of white journalists" onto the job posting from Carleton. "I realized [it all] aligns … so I applied." The Carty Chair is the first of its kind at Carleton and across Canada. No other journalism program has a chair permanently committed to diversity and inclusion studies.

Until the summer of 2020, Carleton's journalism school didn't either. Allan Thompson, a professor and now the program head, insists the school had made the decision to

convert its permanent chair in business and financial journalism into one that focuses on diversity and inclusion even before the calls to action were released. The decision was part of other strategic steps the school was taking since 2019, when Atong Ater, a former student in the program, shared her experiences as a journalism student at Carleton in a personal essay published by the CBC that May. A job posting for the position from September 2019, however, continued to advertise the Carty Chair as one specifically geared toward business and financial journalism, as it had been in previous years. While unclear about when the decision to change the focus of the job was actually made, Thompson says the new direction for the Carty Chair as one geared toward equity and inclusion gave the school a unique opportunity to maneuver around challenges that come with the hiring process, such as budget constraints from the university and the ability to hire new permanent faculty only when existing full-time professors retire from their positions.

It also meant the school would have a permanent member committed to spearheading equity, diversity, and inclusion, and that no budget cuts or hiring changes would affect this work. "[Endowed chairs] exist in perpetuity … and the Carty Chair had been empty for a couple of years because the occupant retired and the position hadn't been filled," Thompson says of the decision. "Strategically and ethically, I think it was a really wise choice to use that opportunity to create the first chair of its kind in a Canadian journalism school, where that person would have a priority to look at a whole range of equity, diversity, and inclusion issues in journalism," he adds. "To conduct research, to create new courses, to be available to students and faculty as a resource and to be a champion, but also just to be another faculty member."

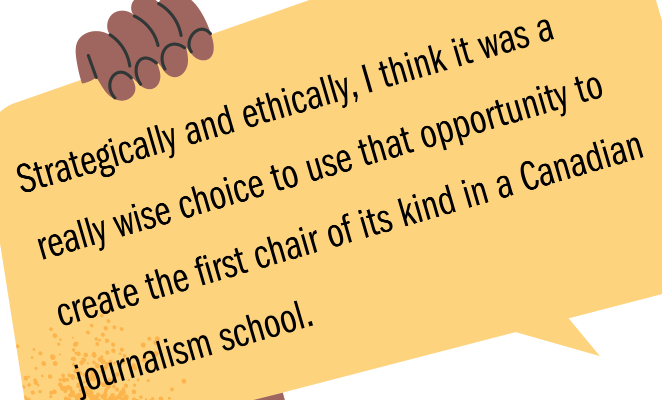
Outside of budget constraints though, Thompson says he recognizes other challenges exist when it comes to hiring diverse faculty too. Perhaps rethinking the job also means rethinking the job requirements, especially the fact you need to have a master's degree in order to apply for a faculty position. "Are we missing out on some really good journalists out there who have solid careers behind them, who might be interested in teaching, but don't have a master's degree?" he says. The conversation, however, goes beyond the school's decision-making capacity. It continues with the university, which is ultimately responsible for changing job requirements, Thompson adds.

Creating opportunities for growth

Duncan completed her first year as the Carty Chair this July, having designed a course on journalism and belonging and begun working on a podcasting course for the upcoming year. She says the big difference between her job now and those in the past is that at Carleton, Duncan is "simultaneously a professor and the person who cares about diversity." At the CBC, where she was the founding co-chair for Diversify CBC, a resource group for employees of colour, Duncan remembers the work being unpaid and something she did after hours, often on top of everything else. "I was doing [diversity work] at the side of my desk while also being the host of the weekend morning show, while also having a three- and five-year-old at home," she says. "The difference between my work here at Carleton and my work at CBC is that I had two sides to myself at CBC," Duncan adds, "and as strange as it sounds, in this position [of the Carty Chair], I feel freer to express how much I care about inclusion and diversity."

The work has in no way been easy, especially with working during a pandemic—often remotely or online—working from home while being a mother, and especially working to implement change that can often be emotionally draining too. It has, however, also been immensely fulfilling. "What has been rewarding is how students have responded to my course," Duncan says, recalling the last day of class for her course on journalism and belonging. Students in the course shared with her a Kudoboard they had made. In it, they wrote their experiences in the class, thanking her for giving them the space to talk about complex issues so openly. Knowing it was her course that made these students feel that sense of gratitude filled Duncan with gratitude herself. "I just want us to continue to be fearless and curious and to do the work with respect."

CBC journalist Adrian Harewood also joined Carleton's journalism program following the calls to action released by students and alumni in 2020. An associate professor at Carleton, Harewood says the position has given him the opportunity and space to conduct research and create courses that illuminate Canada's Black history. An example of this is a course that focuses specifically on the history of Black journalism in Canada. "I'm really enjoying the process of creating the course and of creating curriculum and of



identifying figures and media outlets that might be unfamiliar to people," Harewood says. "I'm also working on a longer-term project looking at the history of a very prominent Black newspaper in Canada called *Contrast* that was active in the late 1960s and 1970s and really was part and parcel or a product of the civil rights movement." Harewood's parents wrote for *Contrast,* and he says the research process has been interesting, given that one of the most important interviews for the project was with his 85-year-old father. These opportunities—to research and to build a more inclusive curriculum—are giving Harewood the chance to help reduce the disconnect "between the academy and the community." He sees his work as a way to "get busy outside of our comfortable spaces."

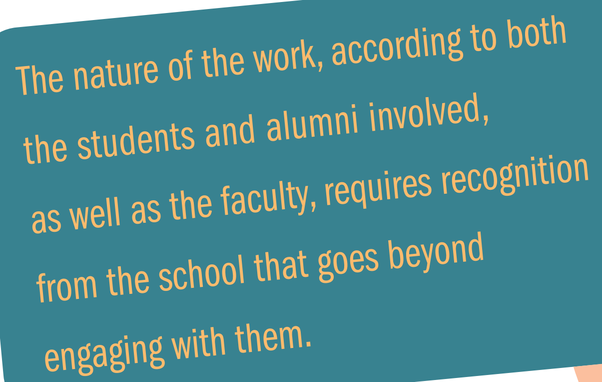
"Carleton is not this rarefied place, which only exists for members of the social, economic, and political elite. It is an institution that we own, too," Harewood says. "I see that as being part of my own job and practice of trying to make space for more people but also to harness the resources of the university and share those resources with the community that we're a part of." His goals are varied, but being part of the faculty at Carleton and having opportunities for research, has magnified them.

"I want Carleton to be a leader when it comes to all aspects of journalism education," Harewood says of his plans. "I want us to be a space where we are comfortable taking risks [...] where we embrace discomfort." Ultimately, Harewood says he wants the program "always to be ahead of the curve. Looking back always, and appreciating history, but also looking forward in a very kind of bold way."

A far-from-perfect process

Many of the students and alumni who worked on releasing the calls to action in 2020 have also been working with the school to implement them. The process is far from perfect. Much like Duncan's experience doing diversity and inclusion work at the CBC, students and alumni involved in addressing the calls to action are not paid for this labour, and many of them do it outside of their full-time jobs.

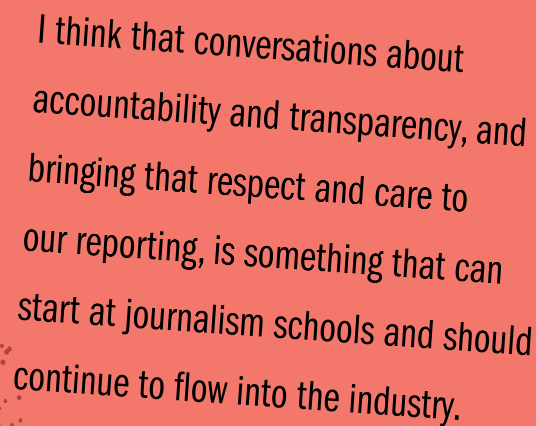
"We're all working reporters with many other responsibilities on top of this," Olivia Rania Bowden, a reporter with the *Toronto Star* and an alumnus from the program, says. "When we decided to [publish] these calls to action, we were like, where do we have a voice? And what can we push?" For Duncan, the work of diversifying the oldest journalism program in Canada has been a rigorous process on the faculty level too. Whether through diversifying the curriculum and the courses, the guest speakers who engage with students, or the research projects she takes on, Duncan says the work of pushing for equity and inclusion both within the classroom and outside of it is "emotionally draining and sometimes, there are the surprise moments of harm."



An example of this, Duncan says, is when in some situations, she has heard a person say something racist or offensive or ignorant "and you either don't know what to say, or you have to do the calculus." For Duncan, the calculus involves deciding "whether or not I'm going to say something. And then if I decided I am going to say something, what am I going to say? And that calculus also includes: how is this person going to take it? How is my relationship going to change with this person?" According to Duncan, institutions like Carleton need to recognize "there is a burden that they don't understand and it's a burden they don't know. Just as in the same way if my position was held by an Indigenous journalist or a person who went through a lot of trauma as a young person or a trans professor—there's going to be a burden that they have that I wouldn't know."

The nature of the work, according to both the students and alumni involved, as well as the faculty, requires recognition from the school that goes beyond engaging with them. "What really bothers me is when [the school has] made changes, they don't credit us publicly," says Bowden. "I know they've said they were thinking about this or working on [certain changes] prior to our calls, but the thing is we did it really quickly and really well around our extremely demanding jobs because we don't have a choice but to make it happen. As people of colour, we don't have a choice." It also means recognizing the push for equity, diversity, and inclusion may have begun with students and alumni of colour, but that white students and faculty within the program are equally responsible for solutions and change moving forward.

"Feeling bad or guilty is useful only as much as it is a natural feeling, and if it propels you to action, then that's good," says Duncan. "But I think allyship also means not performing your sadness or your guilt about the fact that systemic racism exists. And knowing that the performance of those feelings—it comes across as looking for absolution from BIPOC students or faculty. As we always say, it's really about doing the work," she adds. "Do the work with your colleagues, maybe with your other fellow white students, do the work within yourself."



The challenges that remain

While Carleton's journalism program has taken steps to address the calls to action released in 2020, especially when it comes to diversifying faculty and sessional instructors within the program, leaders at the university continue to remain white. The Racialized Leaders Leading Canadian Universities research published in *Educational Management Administration & Leadership Journal* last year found that "universities in Canada are overwhelmingly top-down institutions."

"Even with an executive-level diversity advocate, there can be issues with diversity at the organizational level," the research says. "Scholars have warned that these positions have the potential for tokenism, 'whereby Chief Diversity Officers [and similar positions] may be seen as the face of diversity, but lack the formidable authority and support to create real and lasting change.'" Data from 2020 used in the research shows that 80 percent of Carleton University's leadership is white, with 60 percent of leadership positions being held by white men, and another 20 percent held by white women. There are no Black or Indigenous men or women in leadership roles at the university.

Mohamed Elmi, the acting executive director at Toronto Metropolitan University's Diversity Institute and a co-author of the paper, says barriers at three levels—societal, organizational, and individual—determine how many people of colour seek leadership positions in academia. One of the biggest barriers, however, is that longer career trajectories within post-secondary institutions mean those leadership positions are much slower to change.

"Even though from the outside, they [post-secondary institutions] are viewed as progressive, they are relatively bureaucratic and very slow," Elmi says. At the same time, Elmi says the responsibility for better diversity and inclusion within the university must not fall on leaders alone. Instead, organizations and individuals that support a university, whether through funding or strategic partnerships, must also call on institutions to address diversity. "You don't want to put the onus on the individuals, especially in a system that is not responsive," he says.

A blueprint for the future

More than two years since the calls to action were first published by students and alumni, Carleton's journalism school has taken significant steps to address the first: hiring diverse faculty. At the same time, conversations about other calls to action listed in the document are still taking place between the journalism school at Carleton and the university at large. Among these is the call to collect race-based student data and abolish unpaid internships. It is unclear how the diversity of Carleton as a university—or lack thereof—is affecting these conversations. Thompson does say they are ongoing. For students and alumni involved, the unmet calls to action remain front and centre. For Bowden, it's important the school now goes from addressing the calls to action to defining its mission over the next couple years. It's a way of ensuring accountability, especially since she feels "a lot of these issues in the industry, I think can be tackled by j-schools."

"I'm happy to see [changes] but I don't want blog posts on our website being like, 'Oh, we randomly did this and we randomly did this,'" Bowden says. "I want to see that in six months, [the school has] committed to [particular changes], and are they going to happen? And if it doesn't, somebody is going to face consequences for that."

"That's how any planning is done," she says, adding, "When I do see it, that's when I'm going to feel more confident about this process." For Ng, who graduated just this summer, the changes that Carleton's journalism program has made so far, as well as the ones they hope the school commits to making in the future, could ensure that equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives implemented in the classroom have a positive impact on newsrooms across the country as well. "I think that conversations about accountability and transparency, and bringing that respect and care to our reporting, is something that can start at journalism schools and should continue to flow into the industry," they say. "[It all] links back to journalism school because I think this is the place where a lot of journalists are shaped and where we first begin to understand journalistic values and the history of our role as reporters." AM

Meral Jamal is a journalist in Nunavut via Ottawa. Originally from the United Arab Emirates, she is a graduate of Carleton University's School of Journalism and a reporter with Nunatsiaq News.

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