John Abbott College Faculty Association Newsletter



Student Evaluations of Teaching: Revisions of Policy 12 at John Abbott

By Tanya Rowell-Katzemba- HEPS

The John Abbott Administration has expressed interest in revising the College's Policy 12 on the Evaluation of Teaching. JACFA is following these developments closely and is meeting regularly with the administration to negotiate this file.

In anticipation of the revision process, we have done some preliminary research on student evaluations of teaching (SETs) and have conducted consultations with faculty regarding this issue. This article aims to do three things: it will provide a general overview

of research on SETs; it will provide some background on how the current policy came to be; and outline the current state of the revision process thus far.

SETs: a nonexhaustive review of the current research

hile researchers have not quite reached a consensus on many of the issues surrounding SETs, ¹ there is increasing concern among university faculty in North America and Europe about the role of implicit bias when students are evaluating their professors.² Several studies have suggested that unconscious or implicit bias relating to gender, race and sexuality play a role in the way that students

evaluate their teachers. To be more precise, man are generally perceived to be more competent that women not only by their students, but in academia in general. Race is an important intersecting variable in this discussion as well: as Gutiérrez y Muhs et al argue, "women of colour too frequently find themselves 'presumed incompetent' as scholars, teachers and participants in academic governance." 3 Even when being asked to judge a professor on seemingly "objective" criteria, such as whether or not the class starts on time, the student's perception of the professor's gender has an impact on their rating in that cate-



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Correction: an article in Spring issue "Teacher's tribute to Sylvain" was mistakenly credited to Mark McGuire. The author is Tom Young.

JACFA General Assembly and Xmas Lunch: December 13 gory.⁴ Given the fact that It is very common for personnel decisions at colleges and universities to be influenced by SETs, it is imperative that the role of gender and racial bias be acknowledged and addressed by college and university administrations. Some researchers also argue that, while SETs clearly have their limitations and significant problems to address, student feedback can also be valuable.⁵

Some studies have proposed potential alternatives or supplementary forms of evaluating teachers. Some of these appear to us as being somewhat unwieldly- for example, Sarah Pritchard of Cornell University suggests calculating the "average gender bias" at a given teaching institution, and then assigning a "bonus" to a teacher who could be potentially negatively affected by this bias, applying it to the quantitative data.6 One model that we read about in research that appears to have the potential to mitigate some of the problems inherent to SETs in their current format is the Cascaded Student Evaluation Model.⁷ This involves having different sets of questions that are put to students when they are asked to evaluate teachers. In this model, one set would be standardized, applied across departments and faculties throughout the institutions, while other sets could be formulated by departments and even individual teach-

SETs at John Abbott College and the Revision of Policy 12

John Abbott adopted Policy 12 on the Evaluation of Teaching in October of 2006 and its Guide authored by the Quality of Education Committee, a parity committee of JACFA and academic administrators.⁸ It is important to note that, while in many postsecondary educational institutions, including some CEGEPs, SETs are summative in nature (meaning that they can affect personnel decisions, such as the decision to grant tenure or to fire a teacher), at John Abbott SETs are primarily formative, meaning they are meant to act as a professional development tool for teachers. New teachers in particular go through more SETs: they are performed for each class for the first three semesters of teaching at John Abbott.

Policy 12 has not been revisited since it was first created, and the Quality of Education Committee has been largely inactive in the last few years. Given the fact that it has been over ten years since the College has reviewed or updated this policy, the Administration has decided to make this revision a priority for the 2017-2018 academic year. The JACFA Executive has taken up this file, and, in partnership with the administration, has struck a parity committee to undertake the revision process. We have done research and sought feedback from departments (in June 2017), conducted a faculty survey and consulted our General Assembly (this past September) to see what teachers think about how the policy on student evaluations of teaching has been working out so

The feedback received from the general call to departments, from the survey, and from the General Assembly can be summarized as follows:

 Questions and critiques have been put forward regarding how helpful the SETs and the subsequent meetings with Program Deans are; many expressed that, while meant to be formative and

- helpful as a professional development tool, the procedure in current format is not.
- At the General Assembly, teachers expressed that they would be receptive to more formative, constructive feedback in their meetings with Deans after receiving their SETs, by being directed towards professional development resources dedicated to this purpose.

In addition to doing research and seeking feedback that was summarized above, the JACFA Executive has examined the policy itself and reflected on how we perceive it has been working so far, and came to the following conclusions:

- The policy has generally functioned well from a labour rights perspective (largely fair; hasn't impinged on teachers' rights; allows new teachers to make mistakes);
- We would like some clarification on what constitutes a "serious offense" according to the Administration, because this is what triggers the Administrative Evaluation Procedure (which has disciplinary implications for teachers);
- The Cascaded Evaluation Model may be a desirable model for fixing some of the problems with the student questionnaire;
- Giving Deans access to first semester SETs is of very limited value;
- A clearer procedure for linking teaching evaluations to professional development opportunities would strengthen the formative character of the SETs.

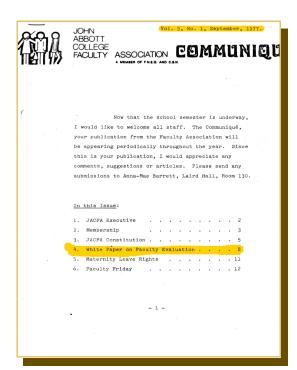
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What does the JAC Administration want?

he JACFA Executive, in our interactions and meetings with the Administration, has identified some of the Administration's priorities in the policy revision process. It is clear to us that the Administration would like Deans to have access to a teacher's first semester SETs. While some department feedback has shown support for this idea, feedback from the survey and General Assembly indicated that many teachers question the usefulness of this idea, raising questions about how much training and support our Deans receive to provide direction to a new teacher who may be struggling with the job. The Deans do, however, appear to support the idea of linking teaching evaluations to professional development resources

⁵Mark Seasons et al (Course Evaluation Project Team), "Report on the Course Evaluation Project Team," University of Waterloo (Nov. 7th, 2016); Benton and Ryalls, "Challenging Misconceptions," 7.

⁶Sarah Pritchard, "Should female faculty get bonus points to correct for gender bias in student evaluations?" June 26th, 2015, https://www.higheredjobs.com/ articles/articleDisplay.cfm?ID=692 John Abbott College," CEGEP John Abbott College.



Before the <u>Advocate</u>, there was <u>JACFA News</u> and before that the <u>Communique</u>... and 40 years ago we were discussing Faculty evaluation with the Administration!

¹ Stephen L. Benton and Kenneth R. Ryalls, "Challenging Misconceptions About Student Ratings of Instruction," Idea 58 (April, 2016).

² Anne Boring et al, "Student evaluations of teaching (mostly) do not measure teaching effectiveness," Science Open Research 1 (Jan. 7th, 2016); Anne Boring et al, "Student evaluations not only unreliable; they are biased against female instructors," London School of Economics Impact of Social Sciences Blog, Feb. 4th, 2016, http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2016/02/04/student-evaluations-of-teaching-gender-bias/.

³ Gabriella Gutiérrez y Muhs et al, Presumed Incompetent: the Intersections of Race and Class for Women in Academia, (Boulder: University of Colorado Press, 2016): 1.

⁴Boring et al, "Student Evaluations of Teaching," 1.

⁷ Seasons et al, "Report," 2; Benton and Ryalls, 7.

⁸ Quality of Education Committee, "Guide to the Evaluation of Teaching at

The ADVOCATE



Loyalty to the Employer, Academic Freedom, and Professional Autonomy in CEGEPs

By Stephen Bryce- Geosciences

Over the years, a number of few teachers have come in to the JACFA office to tell us that they have been accused of "disloyalty" to the College. How can this happen? Are we not protected by our "academic freedom"?

Association of University Teachers (CAUT), academic freedom includes:

...freedom to teach and discuss; freedom to carry out research and disseminate and publish the results thereof; ...freedom to express one's opinion about the institution, its administration, and the system in which one works... Academic freedom always entails freedom from institutional censorship.¹

In contrast to universities, if you search through our CEGEP collective agreement, you will not find "academic freedom" mentioned. Our union federation has fought to have college teaching recognized as part of higher education and, in the last negotiations, to "Recognize the academic freedom and freedom of opinion of CEGEP professors" was one of our demands. This was rejected by our employers (a similar demand has also been rejected in the current negotiations of Ontario's college teachers).

On the other hand, the Quebec Civil Code requires all employees be "loyal" to their employer. This is defined as requiring an employee to be faithful and honest to their employer, to maintain the confidentiality of information, as well as to avoid intentionally damaging the employer's reputation or spreading false infor-

mation about it. And employers (including colleges) can be quite protective about their reputations!

Even union officers, whose role might appear to provide them with extra protection, have been targeted with accusations of disloyalty. In the past 15 years, the presidents of the LaSalle College teachers' union and the Bishop's University professor's union have been so accused, and in the first case, ended up being fired.

So where does this leave us? Our collective agreement does give a great deal of autonomy to teachers and departments over the courses we teach. While arguments in course committees may seem like a pale substitute for academic freedom, we have far more collective control over our pedagogy and curriculum than, for example, the Ontario college teachers. As well, our collective and local agreements provide arenas for academic debate, starting with the department but also including program committees and Academic Council.

So, while an individual teacher should think carefully about the possible consequences of openly criticizing the College in the media, we should not be afraid to speak up to initiate or participate in debates (civilly, of course!) on campus. Especially about our teaching and pedagogy

¹CAUT (2011) "Policy Statement on Academic Freedom"



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Board of Governors Report

By Anna Woodrow-HPR

Hi everyone,

Just a few things from the Board of Governors September and October meetings that your faculty reps (Roberta Silerova and Anna Woodrow) thought you might find of interest.

- 1. The College has made an application to the Quebec government to acquire and renovate Brittain Hall. The application would use the old pool area for a lighting studio for Theatre and the rest of building would be used primarily for student space, student activities and offices. All depends on the funding (estimated at \$37 million) with a chance that they could tear the building down and start over if it is too far gone into disrepair. The College would prefer to keep the existing building and renovate, but what will happen depends on the government's response.
- 2. The College is proactively discussing what to do about the changes coming with legalisation of marijuana as we will need to have a policy suited to the College.
- 3. The College received the Quebec government's instructions for institutions of higher education, to develop a plan around sexual assault. Work began last semester and now there is a Sexual Assault Response Team (SART), but there needs to be further development on education, management, treatment, reports, support and safety. At Orientation week this year, the 'Tea and Consent' video was shown to incoming students to begin the conversation about consent.
- 4. The Academic Dean is interested in developing student exchange programs for John Abbott students to complete a semester in their program of study at a francophone CEGEP to bolster their Frenchlanguage ability. There is a lot of interest among francophone students coming here for a semester as well.
- 5. There will be consultations regarding the Strategic Plan a sort of mid-way evaluation to see how we are doing and what can be streamlined or improved.

From the (pretty quiet) October Board meeting:

6. The Quebec government has informed higher education institutions they must move towards becoming completely smoke-free campuses. The College reported that they are working with the MacDonald Campus of McGill (which had already made the decision to go smoke-free) to identify designated 'smoking' areas. This is much more restrictive than the current rule of no smoking within nine metres of any College entrance. There does not appear to be an intent for formal consultation on this. [Editor's Note: the DG informed the JACFA Executive in early October that this measure was coming.] The decision on the locations of the designated areas for smoking will be made soon and a new smoking policy will be presented to the next Board meeting at the end of November, coming into effect after it has been approved ■

The ADVOCATE







Editor's note:

Since 2013, Luigi Pastò (from the Psychology Department) has been documenting the plight of temporary migrant workers in Canada through his photography project: Conditions of Worth. His works are currently featured in a photography exhibit at the National Human Rights Museum in Winnipeg. They have also been published in numerous media outlets, including Canadian Dimension, The Guardian Newspaper, Prsensa libre newspaper (Guatemala), and Le Devoir. Here is a selection of works from the project, along with a description of the project in the activist-artist's own words. To view a more complete selection of Luigi's work visit: http://www.luigipasto.com/

Conditions of Worth

By Luigi Pastò-Psychology

emporary foreign workers are immigrants entering Canada on time-limited work permits. They are classified as "lower skilled" and are consequently precluded from permanent residency. In 2006, for the

first time, the number of immigrants entering Canada with a temporary work permit exceeded the number entering with permanent residency status. The gap has steadily widened since then. In 2011, immigrants with temporary work permits accounted for 55% of the 350 000 total new arrivals to Canada. This trend has been primarily employer driven.

The predominant political and economic narrative depicts temporary labour migration as a win-











win scenario. Employers benefit by receiving access to a flexible workforce, enabling them to adapt to local labour shortages. Migrant workers, on the other hand, are presumed to benefit from access to greater incomes than would be available to them in their own country. This discourse is supported by the assumption that migrant workers have the same workplace rights as local workers. This narrative is contested by the individual experiences of migrant worker in Canada, who exist in a precarious space. These workers have fewer "effective" rights than other workers, and are constantly vulnerable to abuse and exploitation by employers. They are both so-

cially and economically marginalized, and , to the majority of Canadians, effectively invisible.

This ongoing series of photographs document the lives of a group of temporary foreign workers in Quebec over the course of the last 5 years. These workers come from Central America, Africa, and Southeast Asia. They work during periods ranging from four to ten months, after which they are sent home, where they anxiously await an invitation to return. The health and welfare of their families often depend on the income they obtain in Canada. While in Canada, they volunteer time to non-profit community organizations that advocate for the rights of temporary foreign workers, they lobby government officials for increases in the minimum wage, and they join the struggle of other workers seeking broader labour reforms. Each , in their own way, is an engaged citizen committed to their shared struggles in Canada, and to their adopted communities. These pictures reflect some of their experiences, contributions, and struggles

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View from the floor of CSN Congress, at the Montreal Convention Center, where more than 1000 delegates were in attendance.

65° Congrès de la CSN Montréal – 2017

Highlights and JACFA Participation at

June 2017 CSN Congress

By Roy Fu- HPR

JACFA took part in the CSN's most important assembly this past June in Montreal: the CSN Congress. The Congress is a triennial meeting of delegates from all CSN unions, from both private and public sector, representing more than 300 000 workers. At this meeting, delegates elected the CSN Executive, debated and approved its financial statements and budget, and debated its political priorities for the following three years. JACFA sent two voting delegates to this event. The following are highlights from this year's meeting.

- The meeting was dominated by the recent loss of 22 700 CSN members, mostly in the health sector, due to union raiding by other union centrals, most notably the ATPs (L'Alliance du personnel professionnel et technique de la santé et des services sociaux) and FIQ, the independent nurses union (Link). This union raiding, and consequent discord between unions, was engineered by the Quebec Liberal Government's Bill 10 in 2015, under the pretext of a reorganization in the public health sector. The loss of so many dues-paying members will have a significant impact on the CSN budget for the next three years. We were relieved to learn that cuts to CSN services, such as legal counsel, will not directly affect JACFA.
- JACFA, along with 20 or so other unions from FNEEQ, attempted to push forward a motion that would make CSN engage in more democratic consultations during the publicsector collective- agreement
- negotiations. Although the motion made it onto the order paper, it did not make it onto the floor for debate due to time constraints. The motion was subsequently debated and defeated at a different CSN body, the Confederal Council, where unions such as JACFA do not have direct representations as votes are by union federation. In spite of this setback, JACFA representatives remain co mitted to pursuing more direct and meaningful democratic participation within the CSN, particularly when it comes to negotiations in the public sector. We are waiting for our next opportunity to push again! (For a list of all resolutions adopted at the CSN Congress click here.)
- The CSN elected a new 1st Vice President, Caroline Senneville. Senneville was the president of FNEEQ and came to visit us on the picket line at John Abbott during our last strike. She replaces Francine Lévesque, who retired. As 1st Vice President, Senneville will be responsible for leading the CSN's public-sector negotiations in 2020 ■



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Inter-syndical briefs By Roy Fu- HPR

Collège Stanislas Grievance at the Labour Tribunal

The grievance of support-staff workers at Collège Stanislas against their employer was recently brought before Quebec Labour Tribunal (TAT). More than 30 workers were fired and replaced with subcontractor workers, days before the expiry of their collective agreement in June 2017.

The union is campaigning to rally public support for its

demands: reinstatement of all the workers and return to the negotiation table. Recently, it held a successful protest during the College's Open House on September 30, where it enjoyed an array of inter-syndical support, including representation from JACFA.

At its September General Assembly, JACFA passed a solidarity motion along with a donation of \$500.

The legal process is ongoing. In the meantime, the affected workers are being financially supported by the CSN's Professional Defense Fund with a weekly stipend.

To sign the online petition is support of the workers, <u>click</u> <u>here</u> ■



Roy Fu (middle back) with Collège Stanislas support workers at September 30 Open House protest.

11 000 Daycare Workers Obtain a Strike Mandate

CSN Daycare workers from across Quebec recently voted overwhelmingly (94%) in favor of a six-day strike mandate. The first of six strike days was exercised on October 30. The dates of the remaining five days have not been announced.

The Consortium of 37 unions representing 11 000 workers at 400 CPEs (Centres de petit enfance) have been in negotiations with the government since March 2015.

The Strike mandate is a response to the slow pace of negotiations and the government's unyielding efforts to claw back workers' acquired rights in their demands. The latter include:

- Increased employee contributions for insurance premiums
- Denial of participation in daycare Boards of Directors
- Reduction in paid breaks
- A salary increase lower than the one obtained by other public sector workers
- Reduction in paid personal leaves
- · Refusal to acknowledge the resources needed for children with special needs

The negotiations are happening against a backdrop of province—wide, \$120 million cut from the annual budgets of public daycares implemented in 2016, under the auspices of the government's austerity program. Incidentally, while hundreds of millions dollars have been cut from the province's public health, education, and social services, the government is projecting a budget surplus of \$4.6 billion for 2016-2017, which doesn't include the more than \$2 billion it is injecting into the *Fonds des Generations* to eventually pay down the debt ■

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Syndical Tool Kit:

Application Tracking System for CV Manager





Are you a non-tenured teacher? Tired of constantly monitoring the employment opportunity web page, for anticipated vacancies/postings in your discipline at the end of each semester? If so, worry no more. With just a few strokes, you can automatically be informed by email when an employment opportunity in your department becomes available. Just follow the steps below to receive automatic notification from the College's online system, CV Manager.

Outside the Portal

- 1- Go to the John Abbott main web page; www.johnabbott.qc.ca
- 2- Select "Careers" then from the drop down menu select "Job Alerts".
- 3- Enter the **email address** where you would like to be notified automatically about employment opportunities at John Abbott College.
- 4- From the "Preferred Job Category" select the discipline in which you wish to receive automatic notifications of postings.
- 5- If you desire to receive automatic notification about postings in a second discipline, select it from "Other Preferred Job Category".
- 6- Do not forget to select "Save".
- 7- If you would like to receive automatic notifications about postings in more than two disciplines, repeat steps 3-6.

Inside the Portal

- 1- Log into the Portal.
- 2- Under the heading My Services, scroll down to Employment Opportunities, then select "Available Jobs".
- 3- From the CV Manager Edu screen select "Job Alerts," found on the left-hand side.
- 4- Enter the **email address** where you would like to be notified automatically about employment opportunities at John Abbott College.
- 5- From the "Preferred Job Category" select the discipline in which you wish to receive automatic notifications of postings.
- 6- If you desire to receive automatic notification about postings in a second discipline, select it from "Other Preferred Job Category".
- 7- Do not forget to select "Save".
- 8- If you would like to receive automatic notifications about postings in more than two disciplines, repeat steps 4-7.

Remember, always be in the know!

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Congratulations Are in Order!

The JACFA Executive would like to welcome all of our new colleagues who joined the faculty this fall and extend a hearty congratulations to all colleagues who have received permanence and those who are going to retire at the end of semester. These are significant milestones to be celebrated. We look forward to raising a glass and spending some time with you at the December 13 Christmas Lunch at the Chateau Vaudreuil.

New Faculty:

- Yola Boulos— Dental Hygiene
- **Hubert Camirand** Physics
- Andrea Castonguay Nursing
- Salma Chatoo- Dental Hygiene
- Jenny Cockburn- HPR
- Kelly Ann Foran- Physics
- Sara Froehlich- Mathematics
- Proshat Hemmati- French
- Robert Inch- French
- Jason Lapointe- Biology
- **Jennifer Lupien** Visual Arts
- Meghan Olszanowski- Media Arts
- Manuela Pineros-Rodriguez- Mathematics
- Genevieve Sabourin- French
- Josette Sader- Youth and Adult Correctional
- Lizzie Tukai- Native Languages
- Michael Wees- Media Arts

Upcoming Retirees:

- Christin Davet
 HPR
- Ed Holland– Anthropology
- Erwin Regler– Visual Arts
- Barry Reynolds- English
- Sandra Stephenson– HPR

Newly Tenured:

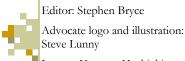
- **Douglas Paul Anderson** Business Administration
- Audrey Elaine Bake

 Mathematics
- Sarah Bean- Anthropology
- Christophe Chowanietz— Political Science
- Simon Daoust- Biology
- Paolo DiStefano- HPR
- Michael Drolet- Theatre
- **Denise Fidia** English
- Julie Hanck– Psychology
- Cindy Hunzinger– Physics
- Luiz Kazuo Takei- Mathematics
- Lidia Kruk– ILT
- Sophie Meunier– PHEC
- Ethan Mombourquette– Mathematics
- Christophe Morris

 Mathematics
- Monika Napier– Visual Arts
- Claude Nicou- French
- Liliya Nikolova Engineering Technologies
- Christina Oltman– English
- Michael Pagano

 Physics
- Noelle Palmer– Economics
- **Jean-Michel Sotiron** Political Science
- Tatjana Struna- Nursing
- Herman Tumurcuoglu– Business Administration
- **Jo-Anne Vezina** Theatre





Layout: Katayon Haghighi
Please contact us if you wish to contribute to the next issue

John Abbott Faculty Association

21,275 Lakeshore Road Ste. Anne de Bellevue Penfield 105 QC H9X 3L9

Phone: 514-457-6610 #5506

Fax: 514 487-9799

E-mail: jacfa@johnabbott.qc.ca

Parking Update

If it seems as though it is harder to find a parking spot in the staff area this semester, it is! In addition to the four staff spots that were converted into electric car charging stations and the eleven spots that were converted into designated car-pooling spots (for staff and students) in recent years, we have lost an additional 13 spots behind the library due to the renovations there. Add to this Macdonald's College's more strict enforcement of the parking rules around its buildings. Many John Abbott faculty complained to us about circling endlessly around the staff parking area with no spots to be found.

The College does not restrict the number of staff parking permits, so when the number of reserved staff spots is reduced, demand from 600-odd staff permit-holders remains about the same. The College does not guarantee you a staff spot each day. Your only solution is to look farther away, into the student parking lot north of the playing fields. It may be a cold comfort (especially as we head into winter), but later-in-the day arriving members of the JACFA executive have not had any trouble finding spots up in the "Siberia" lot so far this semester.

As the College's <u>Administrative Policy in Parking</u> states, "In our ongoing efforts to be more sustainable, the College is promoting alternative means of transportation," so we should not expect to see parts of the lower campus paved over to make more staff parking spots in the future. So, if you can, consider public transportation or car pooling!

Please Welcome Ethan Mombourquette and Stephen Bryce as New Members of the JACFA Executive:

or those of you who don't know me, I'd like to introduce myself. I'm Ethan Mombourquette, the JACFA Secretary, and the newest member of the JACFA Executive.

I'm originally from Nova Scotia, where I studied Mathematics at Mount Saint Vincent and Dalhousie Universities, and began my teaching career at Saint Mary's University. I came to Montreal in 2013 to continue my studies at Concordia and my teaching career at Dawson College, and was lucky enough to find work here at John Abbott in 2014. Since then, I've never looked back. Teaching at a CÉGEP is a dream job for me, and I count myself incredibly lucky to have found my way to the wonderful family that is JAC.

Since starting work at John Abbott, I've found myself looking for ways to get involved in College life outside of teaching. I've launched various initiatives within the Math department, sat

on subcommittees of Academic Council and participated in college events including New Student Orientation, Open House and Parents Night. When I found out last year that there was a position open on the JACFA executive, I jumped at the chance for a new and exciting challenge.

Joining the Executive has been incredibly rewarding, despite the very steep learning curve. My duties include the creation and upkeep of the new JACFA website, coordinating communications with our members, and sitting on the Column D (5.2) and Labour Relations (CRT) committees. I'm also on the team working to renegotiate Policy 12, which governs the evaluation of teaching at the College. All of these are fun, engaging and challenging, but my favourite part of the work so far is definitely our weekly Executive meetings. At these meetings, we sit and discuss issues from all corners of the College and the CÉGEP system. As a group, we share our opinions and experiences, and decide what to do next. I've learned so much about JACFA's history, and about how the College is run while participating in these meetings. And every meeting and every issue is important, complex and unique.

Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to serve on our union Executive. I hope to continue to do so for years to come.

With best wishes, Ethan