

**JACFA Special General Assembly Minutes**  
**5:30 p.m. April 09, 2013**  
**Penfield 204**

The meeting was called to order by the President, Ute Beffert, at 5:45 p.m.

**01. Adoption of Agenda**

Moved by Debbie Lunny

Seconded by Tia Nymark

**MOTION CARRIED** with one (1) abstention.

**1. Allocation Project 2013-2014**

**DISCUSSION**

*Ute Beffert, JACFA President*, opened the meeting by thanking members for coming in such large numbers. She explained that this special general assembly was called to address questions and concerns of members regarding the 2013-14 allocation project, namely the reallocation of Volet II. The following motion to be discussed at the Assembly was projected on the screen:

***Whereas the JACFA Executive has bypassed any timely and reasonable consultation with its members before meeting with the administration to make major cuts to Volet 2 in the 2013-2014 allocation project;***

***Whereas the JACFA Executive has largely ignored arguments from its members to reconsider these cuts;***

***Be it resolved that the General Assembly mandates the JACFA Executive to reject the cuts to Volet 2 at the April 10, 2013 CRT meeting or any subsequent meeting thereof and use our regular surplus of 18 FTE to supplement our allocation project for 2013-2014.***

***Moved by Bill Russell; Seconded by Thierry Neubert***

*Debbie Lunny, HPR*, expressed concerns with the tone of the motion and the frustration expressed which she feels is a possible attempt to scapegoat JACFA. She urged the assembly to pull together and find a strategy to fight the cuts. She suggested rotating cuts among departments might be one solution. She stressed the need for ideas to safeguard job security and the value of education, not fight for scraps. The government is pulling money out of public services and giving it to corporations.

*Edwin Holland, Anthropology*, agreed that Faculty should pull together and could do so by debating and voting for the motion. Holland added that Faculty were not properly consulted in the "Volet II cuts". He stated that the goal of the motion was to give a clear direction to the JACFA executive: its position should be to reject the cuts.

*Maria Mamfredis, HPR*, said that there was not enough consultation on the cuts. She stated that the cuts should be rejected because the process of consultation was too rushed. Faculty need more time to discuss the matter.

*Douglas Brown, Coordinator Arts & Sciences*, asked what the consequences of digging into the surplus are, and what the repercussions of rejecting the cuts would be.

*Alexandre Panassenko, JACFA Vice-President*, answered that cuts would eventually have to be made, because the College is already dipping into the surplus. If the surplus were depleted, more extensive cuts would have to be made to Volet II as well as Volet I, because the College cannot go into deficit. He stated that a few years ago the surplus was at 28 FTEs, that at the end of last year it was down to 14 or 15, and that with this year's project it would probably go down to 10 FTEs. He added that if we do not have an agreement with the College, we would have to deal with the initial project. He further added that the "initial project" implies the first documents that the administration posted at the beginning of CRT, but that there would be issues with this project because it was missing Volet III, the 5.2 and JACFA release.

*Roy Fu, HPR*, said that a second debate needs to happen: how should we use the surplus? He expressed the view that a vote for the motion would be equivalent to making accusations of wilful negligence against JACFA. He said Faculty can't make allegations against JACFA every time the Executive makes a decision some members disagree with.

*Mark Beers, English*, asked if the INCA surplus can be used to offset the Volet II cuts. He voiced the opinion that the INCA money should not be used to buy new computers.

*Ute Beffert* stated that this is the reason the Executive sent out a survey on the INCA Fund: to get a clear picture of what the members want.

*Mark Beers, English*, expressed the view that the survey needs a more definitive sample in order to be conclusive.

*Yves Saint-Pierre, English*, asked what exactly the Executive proposed to the Administration in regards to the INCA surplus, and what they answered.

*Ute Beffert* answered that the Executive had suggested a similar deal for teachers as what occurred with the first SIPD agreement in 2009 (\$1200 per teacher to support additional professional development or to purchase books or computer equipment). The Administration was not comfortable with an individual payout to teachers in a context of cuts and suggested the money be used for something of "collective" benefit. The Executive also proposed that the surplus be allocated only to teachers, but the administration is opposed to that.

*Edwin Holland* spoke to the Motion, explaining that the goal is to put off the "Volet II cuts" for one year, so that more consultation can take place. He said that the perception that some departments had lobbied the subcommittee while others hadn't has left the "worst taste in my mouth in 38 years". He also expressed the opinion that the 5.2 release was judged on criteria that weren't clearly stated by the subcommittee. He protested that Social Science is the biggest department, and yet it got the least 5.2 release.

*Robert Collins, HPR*, asked how much of the surplus would be used if the "cuts" were to be put off by one year.

*Ute Beffert* answered 1.86 FTEs.

*Robert Collins* moved to strike the two “whereas” from the motion, and then vote on it.

*Stephen Bryce, JACFA Executive*, stated that he clearly heard the comments demanding more discussion, but expressed the view that it is important to have a surplus in order to protect teachers. He agreed that JACFA needs to have a deeper discussion about the “ideal number of FTEs” in the surplus, and how Faculty want to use what is left. He stated that the surplus was at 25 FTEs, but in the last 2 years it has dropped by 7 FTEs, and is now down to 18 FTEs. Without the “Volet II cuts” this year, the surplus will go down by 5 more FTEs this year, which will bring us closer to our “ideal number of FTEs” of 10 and may force JACFA to make difficult decisions in the future.

*Stephen* agreed that the subcommittee which negotiated with the administration could have consulted the membership more. To the charge that the Executive had sent the information to the membership late, *Stephen* replied that the Executive itself had only received the administration’s final proposal that Monday at 4:00 pm. He also pointed out that a letter had been sent out outlining the main criteria used by the subcommittee: the complexity of running the department, the number of technicians, specialized spaces. He said the opinion of the subcommittee is that it had come up with a reasonable agreement, and had prevented the administration from making even deeper cuts from Volet II.

*Stephen* expressed the opinion that the administration would not accept putting off the cuts for one more year, considering that they have wanted to make these adjustments for the last 2 years. He believes that the administration will reject the request to hold off for one more year and will impose the project. He said that the motion being discussed is a very bad idea because it ties the hands of the JACFA Executive, and is detrimental to all teachers. There has been a rumor for years that the government will audit the college and take back our surplus, but no one really knows how serious the danger is.

*Cheryl Jenkins, Economics*, asked about the size of our surplus compared to that of other colleges.

*Stephen Bryce* answered that we have the second largest surplus in the entire réseau.

*Cheryl Jenkins* asked if the surplus had been produced by cross-listing courses a few years ago.

*Stephen Bryce* answered that some of the surplus had been generated that way.

*Robbyn Seller, Anthropology*, asked how the agreement was made by the subcommittee. She said the spirit of the motion being discussed was that there was a lack of transparency on the part of the subcommittee. She said the Faculty has been left with questions about which departments were cut and why. She said the faculty would like to go through a process where they could have more input. *Robbyn* expressed the view that there were still lots of questions about how departments were examined other than the subjective reports on their duties: no one went to the talk to the departments, the process was not open.

*Debbie Lunny* asked what would happen if the General Assembly passed the motion being discussed: would the administration be tied to the very first project they presented?

*Stephen Bryce* answered that this was not clear in the Collective Agreement.

*Claire Russell, English*, asked why this was not done earlier? Why did we wait to “make those cuts” with a whole new executive?

*Ute Beffert* answered that the old Executive had put this off for as long as possible, and the new Executive felt it only had the choice between participating in the process and giving “carte blanche” to the administration.

*Abe Sosnowicz, English*, pointed out that it is common in collective agreements negotiations to be told that negotiation gives teachers a better deal than confrontation, but he expressed the sentiment that it is frustrating to hear the same argument at the local level.

*William Russell, History*, expressed frustration that the Executive and the administration had not changed the proposal after being told during the previous General Assembly that the proposed Volet II cuts were unacceptable. He said he is willing to withdraw the first 2 “whereas” clauses, but that the rest of the motion is important. He stated that we have to stand up to the administration.

*Thierry Neubert, Economics*, agreed to withdraw the 2 “whereas” clauses. He expressed his unwillingness to “play the blame game”, and said that perhaps the current Executive had “learnt its lesson”. He said that there needs to be better communication between JACFA and its Executive: we are a grassroots democracy. He said that a 1-year moratorium on the cuts would not be a big deal. Teachers are important: the administration needs them.

**Friendly amendment accepted. Amended motion:**

***Be it resolved that the General Assembly mandates the JACFA Executive to reject the cuts to Volet 2 at the April 10, 2013 CRT meeting or any subsequent meeting thereof and use our regular surplus of 18 FTE to supplement our allocation project for 2013-2014.***

*Moved by Bill Russell; Seconded by Thierry Neubert*

*Edwin Holland* proposed a second amendment: be it further resolved that the membership and the Executive of JACFA work together during the remainder of 2013 to establish principles to guide our negotiations with the administration in the distribution of faculty allocation.

*Thierry Neubert* agreed to the amendment.

*William Russell* did not agree, arguing it was an unnecessary complication of the motion.

*Edwin Holland* explained that this amendment made clear that the faculty does not reject the cuts completely, but that principles need to be established first before going into negotiations. He suggested making a second, separate motion instead of an amendment to the first one.

*Roy Fu* agreed that the process was “not perfect”, but questioned whether putting the cuts off for one year would really make a difference.

*William Russell* responded that the difference would be that faculty would be happier, because they would feel they had been consulted.

*Debbie Lunny* asked whether JACFA could threaten a one-day strike if the administration refused to delay the cuts. She said the cuts are not inevitable, and that the faculty should not internalize the austerity narrative.

Stephen Bryce answered that such a strike would be illegal, but that would not be such an issue. He spoke to the “austerity narrative” by saying that our current predicament is actually the result of rapid growth: we have 40 more teachers than we had in 2008-09, we are putting more resources in Volet I. This is not the result of “neo-liberal cuts”: we are deciding how to allocate resources. He said that we cannot continue allocating more in Volet I (more sections, more labs, etc.) and allocate more to Volet II as well. He expressed the sentiment that it was a good thing that JACFA is discussing allocation again, and that he hopes that the membership and the union would talk more to each other, and listen.

*Maria Mamfredis* said that teachers were not here because they are cut: they are here because they have a problem with the process of how the cuts were decided. She said teachers had gone to see their union executive representatives, had went to the General Assembly, but still felt that their voices had not been heard.

*Marcia Kovitz, Sociology*, said that she agrees with all that had been said: that the cuts were not inevitable, and that we should have a subcommittee made up of representatives from many departments.

*Eric Laferrière, HPR*, said that he would love to go to more meetings to understand the needs of all faculty; that he would appreciate the opportunity to present to others why the Liberal Arts programme should not be cut; that he would welcome an opportunity to discuss how we should promote the College and recruit students.

*Steve Lehman, English*, asked if there are any other surpluses at the College’s discretion?

*Stephen Bryce* answered that there is a surplus generated by other services (residences, etc.), but that this money went directly into the College’s capital budget. There are only two teaching surpluses: the INCA surplus, and the surplus from under-allocation.

*Edwin Holland* answered Debbie Lunny’s question by stating that we could go on a one-day strike, but that courts have decided that the College can force us to teach classes we miss on any other availability day. He said that the intent of the motion is not to stop any changes at all from being made: the intent is for Faculty to be consulted before the changes are made; so that they feel those changes are reasonable.

*Alberto Sanchez, HPR*, expressed surprise at the emotional tone of the motion, but stated he was not convinced by emotional arguments: he would like to hear more strategic arguments to vote for the motion.

*Mark McGuire, JACFA Executive*, thanked the Faculty for coming to the Assembly on such short notice. As the newest member of the Executive, he said he hoped that this was the future of JACFA: wide discussion, rather than 1 or 2 individuals making decisions behind closed doors. He made the suggestion that JACFA could have a syndical council, which could discuss a new allocation strategy and work as a consultative body to the executive committee.

*Marie-Claire Rioux, Biology*, called the question. Seconded by *Frank Lo Vasco, Mathematics*  
**(Motion carried with 3 opposed & 3 abstentions)**

*Suzanne Black, Chemistry*, requested a secret vote. Seconded by *Frank Lo Vasco*.  
**(Motion carried with 48 in favor, 22 opposed & 5 abstentions)**

*Bruce Tracy, Physics* and *Suzanne Black* were chosen as scrutineers.

96 votes were cast: 62 in favor and 34 opposed. **Motion carried.**

## **2. Motion from the floor**

## **DISCUSSION**

***Be it resolved that the membership and Executive of JACFA work together during the remainder of 2013 to establish principles to guide our negotiations with the administration in the distribution of faculty allocation.***

*Moved by Edwin Holland, seconded by Sharon Rozen-Aspler, Sociology*

*Ute Beffert* invited discussion on the second motion, but stated that some members of the Executive perceive the first motion as a vote of non-confidence in the Executive.

*Yves Saint-Pierre* responded that the Executive should not interpret this as a non-confidence vote, because the two “whereas” clauses had been removed from the motion. He said that the Executive had simply been given a clear direction by its members.

*Jessica Burpee, Geosciences*, said that this was not a vote of non-confidence, and that she was looking forward to working in collaboration with the Executive to set up criteria.

*Maria Mamfredis* said that this was not a vote of non-confidence, but that she would like to think that the Executive is learning.

*Edwin Holland* said that the motion is not a vote of non-confidence: it clearly says that the Executive and the membership have to work together. He said that the process of allocation needs to be less ad hoc: the Executive need guidelines in their negotiations.

*Sharon Rozen-Aspler* said that a syndical council could work as well.

*Yves Saint-Pierre* said that it was sad and unnecessary to pass this motion.

*Roy Fu* asked what kind of principles would be used during the consultation mentioned in the motion.

*Ute Beffert* said the answer to that question would come when JACFA and the Executive sat down together.

*Jim Anderson, Police Technology*, expressed concern that the administration might perceive this second motion as a sign of weakness.

The question was called.

**Motion carried.**

It was moved by *Edwin Holland* to end the meeting, seconded by *Bruce Tracy*. **Motion carried.**