

# Examiner



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September, 2014



## Prez Sez

By Geoff Ondercin-Bourne, President, OPSEU, Local 240

### Mohawk Faculty Reject the Deal: Highest “No” Vote in the Province

Mohawk faculty have spoken and make no mistake, you have let everyone know, on all sides of the table and throughout the province, what you thought of the tentative agreement. Almost three quarters of the ballots cast (72.8%) gave an indisputable thumbs down to the deal. Here is the breakdown of the figures:

- Ballots cast: 313
- Voter turnout: 53.1%
- Votes to accept: 85 (27.2%)
- Votes to reject: 228 (72.8%)

**“You have done yourselves, your colleagues and your local proud by standing strong and united.”**

At all three campuses, Fennell, IAHS and Stoney Creek your response was a resounding “No”. **Further, Local 240 had the highest percentage of “no” votes of all the colleges in Ontario** (See the table on page 3). You have done yourselves, your colleagues and your local proud by standing strong and united. Make no mistake: the College knows you are not happy with the deal.

However, the fact is that 61% of faculty across the province actually voted for acceptance, so despite our best effort, this is the deal we’ll be working under. Moving forward, the critical factor that will determine the relationship between the College and

faculty is how management chooses to implement it. Every Collective Agreement we have ever negotiated has been implemented differently from college to college, so we know Mohawk’s administration has options from which to choose.

The message from HR, following the vote, was promising. There will be no hiring freeze, so there may be new full-time faculty coming on board. At first blush, it appears the College is prepared to engage in a constructive relationship with faculty, whatever the new CA says. Of course, we’ll wait to see what happens when the rubber hits the road.

#### Inside This Issue:

*The information in this bulletin is intended for members of OPSEU Local 240.*

Prez Sez.....	1
Welcome, President McKerlie.....	2
Ratification Results.....	3
New Appeals Policy.....	4
Human Resources.....	5
Chief Steward’s Corner.....	6
Greetings from the Board.....	7
Blended Learning.....	8
Union Stewards and Officers.....	9

### **In the meantime, what does the deal mean for faculty?**

- a. A three-year moratorium on staffing grievances, which means full-time hiring will be at the pleasure of the College. For non-full-time faculty, your career might be frozen for a minimum of three years. For full-time faculty, the inevitable revolving door for new hires means mentoring will become an even bigger part of what you do.
- b. The cap on the number of sections assigned to a faculty member has been removed. It remains to be seen what kind of tricks will be used to split up the hours assigned per course in order to increase your workload. Will they hand off on-line hours to technicians, making room for more sections on your SWF? Should the College move forward to implement the intensification of workloads, what will be left for partial load faculty?
- c. Oh, we did get a salary increase: 4.5% over three years. However, the increase doesn't come close to keeping up with inflation, particularly when you factor in the two-year salary freeze, as well as the chicken feed we got in the contract before the freeze. Clearly, the Liberals' war on public sector workers isn't over yet. We believe Tim Hudak would approve. In the meantime, we wonder what kind of bonuses management can expect over the next three years.

While there are other changes to the Collective agreement, those are the "highlights".

### **What's Next?**

The emotions over the new agreement run the gamut from resignation to indignation. However, we also need to think about how we're going to navigate through the provisions of this deal over the next three years. It's early days, but we will be consulting with you to see how we can assist faculty in making workloads as manageable as possible under the circumstances. Also, despite the moratorium on staffing grievances, we will continue to press for the hiring of full-time faculty, which we believe is the path to a stable, effective faculty complement at the College. (I heard references to "shaming and stoning" from other locals, but I'll get "clarification" on what that means.)

## **Welcome, President McKerlie!**

On behalf of Local 240, I'd like to welcome Ron McKerlie as the new President of Mohawk College. Heather Gardene-Tuck (Chief Steward), Kevin MacKay (VP) and I had the pleasure of meeting Ron during his busy first day on the job. President McKerlie told us that working as a team and respecting the stakeholders at the College were high priorities for him.

We were impressed with his awareness of the challenges we have had with blended learning, and we look forward to working with him on those and other issues of mutual concern. The president's commitment to include faculty as part of the team should assist us, as we address the challenges posed by the new Collective Agreement. Welcome aboard, President McKerlie.

# CAAT-A Ratification Vote, Sept 23 2014

## UNOFFICIAL RESULTS, by Local

	Voter Turnout	Accept	% Accept	Reject	% Reject
L110 Fanshawe	45.8%	318	98.8%	4	1.2%
L125 Lambton	43.0%	85	92.4%	7	7.6%
L138 St Clair	68.6%	87	38.7%	138	61.3%
L237 Conestoga	54.0%	254	69.0%	114	31.0%
L240 Mohawk	53.1%	85	27.2%	228	72.8%
L242 Niagara	63.0%	103	39.8%	156	60.2%
L244 Sheridan	31.2%	228	77.8%	60	20.5%
L350 Georgian	47.0%	114	42.4%	155	57.6%
L352 Fleming	39.6%	110	68.3%	51	31.7%
L354 Durham	51.2%	145	72.9%	54	27.1%
L415 Algonquin	47.5%	194	50.5%	185	48.2%
L417 St Lawrence	35.6%	145	97.3%	4	2.7%
L420 Loyalist	74.7%	116	87.2%	17	12.8%
L470 La Cite	52.3%	107	95.6%	5	4.5%
L556 George Brown	41.5%	109	28.7%	260	68.4%
L558 Centennial	47.0%	137	45.2%	160	52.8%
L560 Seneca	37.4%	307	76.0%	81	20.0%
L562 Humber	36.2%	262	58.0%	185	40.9%
L613 Sault	67.4%	33	28.0%	85	72.0%
L653 Northern	57.3%	44	62.0%	26	36.6%
L655 Cambrian	62.7%	66	45.2%	80	54.8%
L657 Canadore	68.1%	85	92.4%	7	7.6%
L673 Boreal	72.9%	80	85.1%	9	9.6%
L732 Confederation	72.0%	77	71.3%	31	28.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>46.6%</b>	<b>3291</b>	<b>61.0%</b>	<b>2102</b>	<b>39.0%</b>

**Note:**

- Eight of 24 colleges voted to reject the tentative agreement.
- Mohawk ranks first, with the highest percentage of votes against accepting the agreement.

## New Math: 45% + \$75. = 1 Mohawk Course Credit

By Geoff Ondercin-Bourne

While the rest of us were sleeping, an anonymous group of administrators, somewhere at Fennell, were thinking, “How can we help students deal with the unreasonable demand that they achieve 50% to pass a course at Mohawk”? Then, came the ‘eureka’ moment. **“What if we allowed students who achieved between 45-49% to write an alternative assignment or exam that would allow them to pass?” (for \$75., of course)** And, thus, a new policy was born.

Well, sort of. There were still a few details to be worked out, including

1. How were the people who actually teach the courses not even told that changes were being contemplated?
2. Who was the originator of this scheme, and what is its purpose—to further lower academic standards? (Remember 60%?)
3. Was there anyone involved from the academic side, apart from a few ADs?
4. How would faculty be compensated to create the alternative assignments and evaluate them?
5. What would they say to students who said they couldn’t afford the \$75. fee?
6. Why are they still ironing out details of a plan to be rolled out by semester’s end?
7. When were they planning to let us in on their little secret?

Also, no one seems to know how faculty were left off the invitation list. Just another Mohawk communication miscue, we suppose. Also, no seems sure who decided that we needed such a policy. The policy, itself, identifies “The Registrar” as the “owner” of the policy, but no names are attached to it as authors. When pressed the College finally said, “Cheryl Jensen did it.” Poor Cheryl. I wonder how many other ‘blue sky’ policies will be attributed to her, now that she’s gone to our nation’s capital.

Apparently, the issue of compensation is being considered, as is the question of turn around time to hand in the revised marks. They still have work to do about the accessibility problem. Putting up financial barriers seems to fly in the face of the college’s commitment to the principle of accessibility.

The Local is not impressed with the backroom decision-making process of this policy. We have requested

- that faculty be consulted before deciding on any policy that affects either our work or academic standards
- that we also be consulted before any attempt is made to implement this policy, and
- that, apart from the above requests, the implementation of this policy be delayed until the summer, so we can plan for the additional work.

As it stands, we have an ill-considered plan that undermines academic standards and opens the door to a wide range of inconsistent and contradictory practices. In fact, as it stands, we think the best option for the College is to simply scrap the policy altogether.

## Let's Put the Human Back in to Human Resources

By Mary Allan, Communications Officer



After reading the summer 2014 edition of In Solidarity, I felt compelled to share my experience with Morneau Shepell (MS).

I was to be on vacation the May-June period. I lost my husband to cancer in April after he was diagnosed only 5 weeks previously. Needless to say, my world was turned upside down, and it wasn't much of a vacation. In trying to deal with everything that had happened I found myself unable to return to work for July-August. I contacted Human Resources, and they suggested that I use sick time for May-June, and then switch my vacation to July-August. This sounded like a reasonable solution and everybody was on board including HR, my Associate Dean and Dean.

However, MS was not in agreement. My application for sick leave benefits was denied, and I was notified of this just a few days before I was to return to work. Needless to say, this caused a lot of anxiety. In order to apply for sick leave, my physician was asked to complete two forms for MS. He said that he had never had to complete such an extensive form before and also that the form was totally irrelevant to my situation. I had to pay for both forms to be completed, which is contrary to the Human Rights Code. A telephone interview was also conducted by MS to gather additional information, and then I was assigned a case worker. I never once met anybody from MS. I had two telephone conversations with them, and this is what they based their decision on. I was encouraged by HR to appeal the decision. My AD and Dean were both shocked and disappointed by the decision of MS.

At first I wasn't going to appeal the decision, as I just didn't have the energy to go through this again. After reconsideration and encouragement from our Union and HR, I decided to proceed. My family physician sent MS a letter expressing his shock and disappointment that they would deny me the use of sick time, and he outlined yet again the rationale for me to be off.

Finally, I received notification from MS that they had reversed their decision and my appeal was successful. Their decision was based on new evidence being brought forward. This was not the case, though my physician only reiterated what he had said in his previous submission to MS.

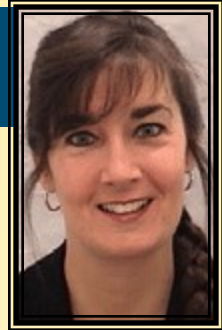
**Where is the Human in Human Resources? You know that this isn't working.**

From my experience, it seems to me that MS has the mandate to deny all applications and then wait to see if anybody appeals. I bet that the majority of applicants feel the way I did when they are denied their sick leave. We are already dealing with an illness; whether it is physical or emotional and just don't have the strength or fortitude to go through an appeal. MS is hired by the Colleges. Why? To reduce the amount of sick time being used. How? By denying the use of it and then hoping that employees won't appeal their decisions. We have earned this sick time and should be able to negotiate and get approval for the use of it through our own HR and not through some external agency who doesn't know us .

Come on Mohawk College you can do better than this. Where is the Human in Human Resources? You know that this isn't working. You were the ones who couldn't believe that my request was denied and who encouraged me to appeal the decision. Don't you think the money being paid to MS to cause this much stress and anxiety for your ill employees could be put to better use by supporting HR in their job of managing the College's human resources? That's right, supporting us, your employees!

## Chief Steward's Corner

By Heather Giardine-Tuck, Chief Steward



Since my last update in April, it has been a very busy and challenging time for your Local 240 Executive members. Here are some of the issues we worked on from May-August:

After reviewing the January non full-time data, we filed 16 staffing grievances in 5 areas (4 Full Time Professors in the Justice and Wellness area; 2 in Graphic Design; 3 in Electro-technology; 6 in Business Management; and, 1 in the Office Administration program). As a result of these staffing grievances, we were successful in getting **13** new FT positions (12 Professors and 1 Instructor) and have a commitment from the College that the hirings which remain outstanding, will occur (in spite of the moratorium on staffing grievances, which we now face).

On the employment stability side, we fought for but lost a probationary member from the Rec & Leisure program as a direct result of the program cancellation. This was very disappointing to say the least. However, in a different department we were able to avoid the layoff of a full time Faculty member by making the case for redeployment. This has since occurred, and the member has successfully transitioned to the new position.

We were successful in supporting 2 members back to work through the use of graduated Return To Work Plans and with the cooperation of the College's RTW Consultant, Kim Robertson.

Through a successful grievance, we were able to assist a member in getting a PD Leave which had been denied, **approved**.

With one grievance and one complaint (the step prior to a grievance), we helped 2 members get their Short Term Disability Benefits **approved**. In both cases, the requests had initially been denied by Morneau Shepell. Local 240 is committed to assisting our members with any issues which arise in dealing with Morneau-Shepell. Please contact us immediately should you have any questions or concerns about them.

We successfully **resolved** a member's WMG complaint where insufficient time for course development and preparation had been given. A new SWF was issued to the member's satisfaction.

We assisted a member to obtain an accommodation plan for Fall 2014 which suited the member's needs.

A member whose initial Step Calculation had been wrong was assisted to have this mistake corrected.

We are presently working with a member whose Long Term Disability benefits have been denied. This appeal is in process, so the outcome is pending.

Personally, I remain a member of the Joint Insurance Committee (JIC) as an OPSEU, Local 240 member. This committee advocates for members whose Long Term Disability claims have been denied. It is important work and gratifying when we are able to convince SunLife to reconsider a previous denial and approve the LTD claim. It is what keeps me

going.

Finally, in spite of the ratification of our contract, I want to assure you that your Local 240 Executive team will continue to advocate for full time Faculty positions over the use of non-full time. We may not have the strength of Article 2 behind us but do have the argument for quality education. It is incumbent on us all to insist upon it and we will.

In solidarity,

Heather

## Greetings from the Board

By Heather Giardine-Tuck, Faculty Representative, Board of Governors

Hello everyone, and welcome back! I hope you all had a wonderful summer. As your Faculty representative, I wanted to let you know that I have now completed the required professional development seminars to obtain my Advanced Good Governance certification. I have learned a great deal about effective governance through these sessions and hope to put my increased knowledge to use in the 2014/15 year as I begin my third year on the Board. I remain a member of the Program Development and Review Committee and have joined the Student Services Committee, as well.

Our first Board of Governors meeting with our new President, Ron McKerlie, was held on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014. The atmosphere was one of hope and optimism for the coming year, particularly in view of the fact that unprecedented, early agreements had been reached between both the Faculty and Support Staff Bargaining Teams and Management groups. Although ratification votes had not yet occurred, all were pleased that we seemed to be off to a smooth and positive start. Presentations were given on: the new Student Services Co-Curricular Record; a gamified course developed by Shaun Iles and, the School of Justice and Wellness Studies. In addition, each committee outlined its work plan for the coming year.

I will have more to report after our Board Retreat October 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> and next meeting November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014. Until then, I hope your semester is off to a good start and running smoothly.



The Future for Ontario Colleges' Employees

## Blended Learning: Next Steps

By Kevin MacKay, Vice-President



In July of 2014, the union resigned from the Blended Learning Steering Committee. There were several reasons for filing our resignation, but the main ones were:

- That the college's blended learning strategy took academic decisions regarding method of course delivery and course content out of faculty hands.
- That the college's blended learning strategy did not offer students choice between online, blended, or fully face-to-face course delivery.
- That the college's blended learning strategy did not address concerns raised in research about the negative impact of online and blended delivery for remedial students, young students, low SES students, and students who's first language is not English.
- That the college's blended learning strategy involves no survey of student satisfaction and preference and absolutely no study of impact of different delivery methods on student academic performance, including grades and course completion rates.

After meeting with new president Ron McKerlie, the union executive emerged with a sense of cautious optimism that the critical concerns raised by faculty about blended learning might actually be addressed by management. Faculty are willing to re-engage in a process of shaping the use of online learning at Mohawk College, but only if management are willing to meet the following conditions:

First, that faculty must be given the ultimate say as to whether a course is suitable for online or blended delivery, or whether it is best suited for face-to-face instruction. In courses where faculty feel that for pedagogical reasons online or blended delivery is not effective, or that it impairs student success, the faculty's academic expertise must be respected.

Second, there must be a college-wide survey of students relating to their experience of online and blended course delivery that honestly assesses their preference in delivery methods. A wide array of students must be given an opportunity for frank feedback concerning their experiences. Stage-managed and hand-picked "focus groups" are unacceptable.

Third, a program of outcomes research must be conducted on blended and online courses in relation to face to face courses. This research should be designed and implemented with input from students, faculty and administration.

These three criteria are the bare minimum that faculty can accept in order to move forward with management's implementation of blended and online course delivery.

The three criteria are backed up by extensive research, and constitute the bare minimum that management should be doing in order to ensure the quality of education being delivered at Mohawk College.



**OPSEU Local 240 Mohawk College Faculty Area Stewards Sept 2014-August 31, 2016**

**OFFICERS**

**President:** Geoff Ondercin-Bourne

**Vice President:** Kevin MacKay

**Chief Steward:** Heather Giardine-Tuck

**Treasurer:** Gaspare Bonomo

**Communications Officer:** Mary Allan

<b>AREA</b>	<b>STEWARD</b>	<b>Office &amp; Phone ext</b>
Architectural, Civil, Urban, Planning, Mathematics	Kevin Haluik	E107B x3994
Brantford Odeon: Academic Up-	Sue Collins	Mohawk Laurier
Business Management Studies	Carl Weston	M-wing x3073
Business Office Administration and Business Graduate Studies Programs	Gaspare Bonomo <b>Treasurer</b>	M-wing x3193
Chemical & Mechanical Technology Programs	<b>TO BE FILLED</b>	E110 x3650
Computer Science Technology	Martin Weddum	E131 x3582
Electro-technology Programs	Sabu Joseph	E240D x3172
Human Services: ECE, CYW, ES,	Heather Giardine-Tuck	J137D x4065
Human Services: ECE, CYW, ES, SSW, RT, CD	Shelley Rempel	A224 x3825
Humanities/Social Sciences	Kevin MacKay	F175 x3364
Humanities/Social Sciences Music, Academic Upgrading, DEP	Neil Jamieson-Williams	F176 x3694
Justice & Wellness Studies	Dennis Campbell	C041 x3145
Language Studies, ESL	Leanne Forsythe	A126 x3210
Language Studies, ESL	Geoff Ondercin-Bourne	A126 x3952
Library, Counseling & Accessibility, CTLR, International	Robert Souliere	H101a library x3936
Media & Entertainment Studies	Patrick Hanson	F108Y x3175
Medical Imaging, CVT, OT-PTA, Pharmacy Tech	Leslie Marshall	A227 x3449 IAHS 342 x53-26849
Nursing: Bachelor of Nursing BScN	Mary Allan <b>Communications Officer</b>	IAHS 340 x (53) 26826
Nursing: Practical Nursing, Personal Support Worker	Marie Stoneman	IAHS 227 x(53) 26760
Partial Load: Fennell Campus	Rebecca Costie	C062B x4643
Partial Load: Fennell Campus	Nancy Lewis	F182 x3856
Partial Load: IAHS campus	Andrea Vidovic	
Skilled Trades: Transportation & Industrial, Apprenticeship, Construction, Electrical, Fuels & Green Tech	Greg Neale	STARRT C114 x5278
<b>TRUSTEES/AUDITORS</b>		M-wing
Carol Tristani		M-wing
Ted Russell		
<b>Union Office</b>		<b>A006 x3468</b>