



ASSOCIATION OF  
ADMINISTRATIVE +  
PROFESSIONAL  
STAFF AT UBC

*Submission by the*

Association of Administrative and Professional Staff of  
The University of British Columbia

*to the*

Legislative Assembly of British Columbia  
Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government  
Services

September 27, 2018

The Association of Administrative and Professional Staff of The University of British Columbia is the professional association for over 4,500 professional staff at the University. Our members play vital roles in every function of the University. They provide leadership and professional expertise to UBC's central service departments as well as within academic faculties and on research initiatives. Our members are located at UBC's two main campuses at Point Grey in Vancouver and the Okanagan Campus. They also work at hospitals and on research sites around the province.

This year we are asking the committee to consider changes that would allow the University and our members to be competitive, innovative, and also stay in British Columbia. UBC makes a significant financial impact on the province, and while we are not asking for an increase in operational funding, we are asking that the committee consider some changes that would best support and retain the people who work at the UBC.

The Association of Administrative and Professional Staff of The University of British Columbia (AAPS) recommends that the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services:

- **Remove The University of British Columbia from the Public Sector Employer's Council Mandate**
- **Secure adequate funding for the newly reinstated B.C. Human Rights Commission**
- **Significantly increase funding for primary care physicians across the province**

### THE PSEC MANDATE IS LIMITING AND OUTMODED FOR RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES

We believe UBC should be removed from the Public Sector Employer's Council Mandate for collective bargaining. Our members are highly skilled and specialized professionals, many of whom hold advanced degrees. A number of our members are recruited from around the world to fulfill roles at UBC as directors, specialized researchers, technology professionals, educators, as well as highly skilled finance and fundraising professionals. These are professions that are in high demand in the marketplace and bargaining under PSEC limits the University's ability to attract and retain top talent.

When PSEC was formed in 1997<sup>1</sup>, the needs and financial position of the University were different. UBC and its budget have adapted and grown to fulfill provincial mandates and the needs of the people of British Columbia. The University has become a top-tier institution for research, community engagement, industry spinoffs, as well as a sustainable community to live and work in. UBC attracts 93% of the province's industry-led research<sup>2</sup>. UBC competes globally for highly qualified staff and should be permitted to engage in this competition unfettered by the restrictions of the PSEC mandate.

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<sup>1</sup> The Province of British Columbia. [About PSEC](#). Web accessed (2018-09-11)

<sup>2</sup> The University of British Columbia. [Shaping UBC's Next Century](#). Page 14. Web accessed (2018-08-31).

While the University receives operational funding from the Province, money for the University comes from a number of different sources including student tuition fees, sales and services, research funding, investments, and fundraising. Many of our members' roles are funded directly through grants or self-generating revenues. The Province does not pay their salaries. As such, our members should not be subject to the restriction of other public service employees who are funded solely and strictly by the government. This is an unfair practice.

UBC makes a significant social and economic impact on B.C.—well over 10 billion dollars<sup>3</sup>. The University is one of our province's largest employers. In order to continue this trajectory of success as well as build on the mandates of innovation, UBC needs the flexibility to bargain outside the PSEC mandate.

Finally, arbitrators have ruled and upheld the ruling that the PSEC mandate should not influence collective bargaining<sup>4</sup>. The UBC Faculty Association has challenged the University to bargain outside of PSEC on numerous occasions and won each time.

The 2013 ruling by arbitrator Colin Taylor Q.C. addresses the arbitrator's response to the imposition of PSEC in sections 53–57. These sections note that “There has been no suggestion that the funding will be withdrawn if an interest arbitration award is made that is not within those bargaining directives...”<sup>5</sup> The arbitrator goes on to say that there was no argument that the University would not use its best efforts to obtain the funds needed to meet its obligations to pay and that UBC's ability to pay is not “Co-extensive” with the Province-wide bargaining mandate or government funding allocations.

Most telling is section 54 when the arbitrator states that “The PSEC mandate does not have legislative force, and therefore does not override the parties' Agreement legislatively.”<sup>6</sup>

As arbitration has made clear the limitations and lack of relevance that the PSEC mandate has to collective bargaining, would it not make more sense to do away with it in the case of UBC and save the expense of yet another arbitration?

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<sup>3</sup> KPMG LLP. [The UBC-Broadway Corridor —Unlocking the Economic Potential](#). February 28, 2013. Web accessed (2018-09-10).

<sup>4</sup> UBC Faculty Association. [Interpreting the Recent Interest Arbitration Award](#). April 6, 2016. Web accessed (2018-09-07).

<sup>5</sup> Taylor, Colin. [In The Matter of An Arbitration Between University of British Columbia and Faculty Association of The University of British Columbia Interest Arbitration 2013](#). Page 31. Web accessed (2018-08-15)

<sup>6</sup> Taylor, Colin. [In The Matter of An Arbitration Between University of British Columbia and Faculty Association of The University of British Columbia Interest Arbitration 2013](#). Page 31. Web accessed (2018-08-15)

## ENSURE THE B.C. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION CAN DO ITS JOB

We would also like to advocate for appropriate funding levels to staff and support the newly reinstated B.C. Human Rights Commission.

While the work of the Commission is not the purview of this committee, ensuring it has the proper funding to be effective is. It cannot be stressed enough that good government initiatives such as the B.C. Human Rights Commission often fail in their mission to serve the public because the governments that put them in place make it impossible for these institutions to be effective due to lack of funding.

Human Rights are too important to be another piecemeal public initiative. There needs to be enough staff to reasonably manage the case-load, provide community engagement, and conduct research.

AAPS is pleased that the government is re-establishing the B.C. Human Rights Commission. As the workplace becomes more complex, it is imperative that employees, employers, and unions have a government institution which will uphold the Human Rights Code. The Commission needs to be a force for change, education, and dispute resolution. As with other government initiatives, we assert the need for the Commission to be adequately funded and appropriately staffed so that it may be proactive, fair, and effective for all people of British Columbia.

## THE PROVINCE NEEDS ADDITIONAL PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIANS

Finally, the government needs to set aside additional funding to hire more primary care physicians across the province.

Again, we are not asking for direct funding for UBC, but increasing the number of family doctors province-wide would have a significantly positive impact on our members, particularly those who are recruited to UBC from out-of-province.

We frequently hear from members who are struggling to find a dedicated primary care physician for themselves and their families. This creates frustration, insecurity, and a loss of productivity. As well, it does not make B.C. an attractive province to move to.

We know that it is vital for our members to have a family doctor should a medical, sick leave, accommodation, or long-term disability need arise as well as to ensure their families are well looked after.

In our office we see first-hand the struggles for members with medical issues, seeking medical assistance or needing documentation for their employer when they do not have a dedicated family physician who

knows them and knows their medical history. Not having an ongoing relationship with a doctor can make it difficult to get a doctor's note, get a referral to a specialist, and provide the appropriate information for sick leaves or accommodations.

Whether the government needs to review how family doctors are billed and paid or recruit more family doctors into the province<sup>7</sup>, we would like to see funding set aside for both immediate and long-term measures to address this crisis in our health care system.

## CONCLUSION

Ensuring that B.C. can continue to be an innovator and economic engine for Canada benefits the people of this province. Let's make changes to ensure that we can keep attracting talent and take care of the workers of British Columbia through fair wages and ability to collectively bargain without restriction. Let's ensure that there is an avenue in place for the average person to have their human rights upheld, and access necessary healthcare professionals.

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<sup>7</sup> Brend, Yvette. We're graduating more doctors than ever, so why is it so hard to find a GP?. CBC New. May 4, 2017. Web accessed (2018-09-10).

## ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

**The Association of Administrative and Professional Staff of the University of British Columbia (AAPS)** is the professional association for the Management and Professional Staff group at UBC.

Professional staff play critical roles in every function of the University. Their leadership and professional expertise are essential to a world-class institution of learning, research, innovation, and community engagement.

AAPS members are highly qualified professionals overseeing information technology; conducting and facilitating research; directing academic and community programs; managing facilities and infrastructure; guiding and supporting students as academic advisors, counsellors, coaches, program administrators, career and co-op advisors, and travel abroad program coordinators. AAPS members lead industry initiatives and seek partnerships with the broader community for economic development, education, and communication.

AAPS is the legal bargaining agent for the professional staff group and represents its over 4,500 members in collective bargaining and dispute resolution with the University.

AAPS supports members in resolving workplace issues and strives to improve their work experience at UBC. The Association also creates a connected community of members through networking and professional development opportunities.

AAPS is registered under the B.C. Societies Act.



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