

October 28, 2014

Important News from the Union - Did you know...

...that the university recently changed the way in which it hires its Presidents? Previously, faculty and staff were presented an opportunity to meet with, and provide feedback about, the short-listed candidates. On this occasion, we will only be able to meet with the candidate they select. This is part of a worrying trend towards non-consultation at Saint Mary's University. It was because of this lack of consultation around the recent survey and program prioritization measures that the SMUFU executive counselled non-participation: we had no say in the survey's formulation and we have no idea how it is to be used. It is not that we would do nothing, but that we feel any new policies at SMU to need to be the result of extensive, collegial collaboration and investigation.

Accordingly, at our last Executive meeting, we passed a motion allowing us to set up our own survey of the challenges at SMU. In the coming weeks, a committee will be meeting to design the survey, which we hope will contribute to a more collaborative experience of working with our administrative colleagues as we 'Go Forward'. **We have opted to conduct our own survey, rather than participate in the one presented to us, for a number of reasons: 1) Over the years, we have had recurrent problems getting reliable data from the administration on key issues, e.g. faculty complement, equity etc. 2) The lack of substantive consultation of faculty on measures such as 'Go Forward' was felt to be problematic. 3) We are concerned about the tendency towards under-representation of faculty on such measures as 'Go Forward', as well as other key committees and initiatives, such as the Presidential search 4) We would like a chance for faculty to help shape the conversations around 'program prioritization' and other such measures. For this to happen, we need to know where we are, what challenges we face, and how we might best meet them.** Do please contact us at the faculty office with any questions, observations or concerns.

SMUFU Executive