

Local 556 Awards Two Bursaries

What's Inside

- 1 Bursary Awards
- 2 It's About Time
- 2 "Alignment" Anyone?
- 3 Mailbox
- 4 Ask the Chief Steward
- 5 Article 11 Flow Chart
- 6 Branding & the
Politics of Colour
- 6 Green Corner
- 7 Update on Post-Strike
Grievances
- 8 GBC Staffing & Enrolment



On behalf of local 556, Tom Tomassi (far left) and Madeline McCarthy (far right) present bursaries to Whitney Wright (second from left) and Jorge Chavez (second from right).

For the past decade or so, Local 556 has been contemplating setting up a Scholarship/Bursary on behalf of the Academic Staff here at the College. It wasn't until two years ago at a General Membership Meeting, that a motion was tabled, debated and unanimously passed to set up a Scholarship/Bursary that would benefit "youth in need" here in the City. The Local responded by setting up a budget line of \$1,500.00 to be administered on a yearly basis. Although the fund was available for the past Academic Year, it was not administered for various reasons. However, the money from the last budget year was rolled into this year's budget to be awarded during this Academic Year.

This year, Local 556 was very proud to present two bursaries on your behalf: One to Whitney Wright (in the Pre-Community Services - Access program) and one to Jorge Chavez (in the Pre-Apprenticeship Plumbing program). ▼

It's (About) Time!

A quick and dirty backgrounder on part-time labour in Ontario colleges*

by JP Hornick

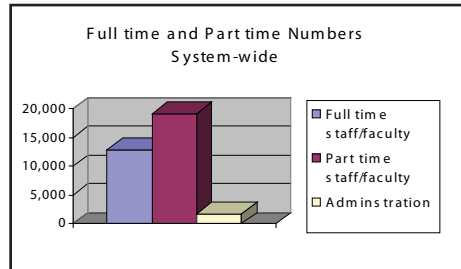
You've probably heard about it by now: the campaign to organize part-time college workers is on! What you might not know, though, is just how historic and important this campaign is to all of us on the full-time side of the cubicle. Here's a bit of context to help put it in perspective.

The college system in Ontario currently educates 150,000 full-time, 350,000 part-time, and 24,000 apprentice students every year—a 53% increase over the past 20 years. Government funding for the system, however, has not kept up with student demand. Although we have the 2nd highest per capita income (trailing only Alberta), we're 9th ranked out of the provinces in per-student funding in community colleges.

What has this meant for faculty? For every 2% increase in student enrollment, our system has seen a 1% decrease in full-time faculty. Expand that to include support staff, and the numbers are even worse. Be-

tween 1985-2006, there has been a 339% increase in the number of part-time support staff, but only a 28% increase in full-timers. And we wonder why our students are frustrated?

Currently, over 50% of college workers in Ontario (both support staff and faculty) are part-time:



In real terms, this translates into 19,200 part-time college employees and 12,874 full-timers (give or take a few). It also represents 1,800 administrators—all of whom are full-time. (Refer to the "GBC Staffing & Enrolment" article on page 8).

Over half of our coworkers don't have access to the basic benefits and rights we've enjoyed for nearly 40 years, and yet they perform the same work we do. They're paid less, and have restricted access to health, dental, and life insurance benefits; they have no job security and don't receive

severance pay when they lose their jobs. Many of us started out as part-time and sessional workers and recall this radical job insecurity all too well.

What can you do? Join in the largest organizing campaign in Canada in the last 50 years—sign up a part-time (or sessional) worker now. Anyone who is a member of OPSEU—that's all of the members in Locals 556 and 557—can sign people up. Just call the local office (ext. 2200) to get cards, help, and more information.

Our goal is to collect over 50% of the GBC part-time staff/faculty by the end of February, when the provincial government's report on part-time college workers is due out. Our hope is that a strong show of solidarity will speed up the process of recognizing these workers' rights.

Why should it matter to us? It's not just that these are our colleagues—this is a human rights issue. In our current climate where the right to organize and collectively bargain is increasingly under fire, we have to stand up now—and stand up together. ▼

See 'Time' notes on page 7

"Alignment" Anyone?

by Bob Luker

Ducks in a row? Geese in a V-formation? The Leafs on a very good day? A hot jazz group? The charge of the Light Brigade? Cattle on a slaughter house ramp? If one is to be aligned, clearly the purpose matters—at least to those in the line.

A management consultant of some note spoke last year to part of the GBC admin crew and assorted others on the idea of management-led "alignment" in institutions as a response to, among other problems, issues of continuity and loss of institutional memory as staff and circumstances change.

I was startled that he supplemented his presentation with video clips that, it seemed to me, perpetuated negative racial, class, and gender stereotypes. When I raised the issue with him, he said he'd consider the criticism. And maybe he will. But his use of those particular video clips suggested to me that getting aligned by and for corporate purposes may be a rather conflicted process.

One of the more interesting things about institutions like Community Colleges, set up to serve the common good at common cost, is that they tend to become somewhat mis-

aligned with some of the purposes of commerce and the state. Perhaps it is partially because the common good is quite distinct, usually, from corporate interests. That misalignment really seems to annoy neo-liberal management theorists.

Neo-liberals usually view public institutions as either opportunities or obstacles. Perhaps the Colleges can be privatized? Failing that, perhaps they can be reorganized (realigned?) to more completely serve corporate interests? Efforts to do some of the above, it seems, are always with us—as is the language of neo-liberal managerialism.

"Alignment" cont'd page 3

“Alignment” *cont'd from page 2*

Students become “customers.” The College must be “branded.” Our goal is student “success.” And so on. Values and vocabulary hostile to education as a complex cultural project are embedded in jargon, practices and techniques supposedly meant to improve administration and teaching. The legitimate and important goal of educating for employment constantly emerges in this talk as the only goal to be treated seriously. And everybody needs to be in “alignment”.

The consultant’s presentation, interestingly, viewed staff who are “committed but not aligned” as an opportunity and a problem. If the energy of their commitment can be appropriately aligned more value can, it seems, be extracted. But if they are allowed to persist in their stubborn misalignment, well...

The devil, of course, resides in the complexity and conflicts of educational purpose. At any given time many of us minions and a substantial number of managers, may be doing educational or support or administrative work that doesn’t totally align with the drive to make high performance conformity to corporate norms the main purpose of education as well as the main feature of everyone’s working life.

We might be working for the well-being of students or the enlivening of knowledge. Or perhaps encouraging the study of the common good or a critique of the systems that impact our lives. Some seriously-out-of-alignment folk may even imagine that a modicum of democracy might be appropriate in the governance of a public institution educating citizens in a democratic society.

Once we add some content to words like “alignment,” an old, impolite but essential, political question looms into view: Who benefits? Indeed, who benefits from proposed specific alignments in our shared but unequal institutions?

Are we all going to align with rising tuition fees, work-loads and class sizes? Not too

cheerfully, I suspect. Will our Board of Governors perhaps align with the International Labour Organization, the faculty and staff union, the student association and those seeking some fairness in labour relations in the Colleges and support the unionization of non-full time faculty and staff? My guess is perhaps not.

There are, of course, some issues that would attract substantial agreement from most of us in the College’s strange and wonderful internal world—like a decent level of funding for the College system. But the uses of that funding might be hotly debated.

“Alignment” as the corporate ideologists promote it, is not primarily cooperation around shared goals. It is rather an attempt to win the debate by pre-empting the discussion. Much better to let the clashing perspectives clang against each other as they are meant to do in democratic institutions. Perhaps we’d see more of the community’s good emerge in the community’s colleges. Now there’s something it might be fun to align with. ▼



Registrar Rage? Packed classrooms, crowded corridors, lining up to urinate...

While senior management rejoices at increasing enrolment at GBC, the rest of us attempt to navigate the constant stress of overcrowded corridors, insufficient classrooms, obnoxious elevator queues and long line-ups to go to the washroom. What all the Higher-ups are patting each other on the back for is beyond me. Having to send students out of the college for their classes doesn’t strike me as good planning. What they call “growth,” and get so excited about, I believe is commonly called gluttony.

Overcrowding in the College erodes all of our working conditions. It makes for an anonymous environment, in which staff are harried and overwhelmed. And it does

our students no favours, as they will tell you when they have difficulty getting online, getting in touch with their professors, accessing the resources they need in the library, or just getting around the college.

These over-enrolment policies have very particular implications for faculty as we are increasingly crowded into smaller and smaller cubicles, in windowless offices, with too many of our colleagues and insufficient access to the technologies we need to do our work well. It is worse for the part-timers, who are often forced to work three or four to a desk and computer—if they are lucky enough to have one. These are the kind of conditions that breed conflict between colleagues, each of us elbowing others for the things we need to teach well.

This kind of crowding also drives faculty off campus, where we can more effectively do the lion’s share of our preparation, evaluation and administrative work. In fact, there is an entire room in my home dedicated to subsidizing the College’s operations. As managers increasingly assign themselves large, expensively decorated offices, I am forced to use my office at home to make up for the shortfall in my working conditions at the college.

I pay for the space, utilities and technology that I use at home to do the preparation, research, administrative tasks and marking that I cannot possibly get done in my cubicle while an endless stream of colleagues and students shuffle in and out of our crowded faculty office. My mortgage payments pay for the space in which to store the books and other teaching materials that will not fit in my miniscule College cubicle. I paid for the computer, and still pay for the internet access that I need to do my job. I pay for the additional heat and electricity I use when I have to do College work at home. And then, I have to listen to managers complain about the limited availability of faculty on campus.

Anonymous ▼



ASK THE CHIEF STEWARD

Question? Can you please help me understand my SWF? *Over-worked*

Answer! The assignment of workloads and the resolution of disputes arising from workloads are covered by Article 11. The article is divided into two parts:

- 11:01 deals with the assignment of and quantification of work.
- 11:02 covers the process for resolving disputes.

The workload assignment: Article 11:01
Our workload is based on teaching contact hours, and arising from that are attributed hours for preparation and for evaluation and feedback.

Preparation is based on whether or not you have ever taught a course previously, have you taught it more than three years ago or more recently. This results in three different factors of 1.1, 0.85, and 0.60. The appropriate factor is then multiplied by the number of assigned teaching hours to generate the attributed preparation hours for that course. If you have taught a course before but there have been substantial revisions to the course outline or the delivery method then a "New" factor of 1.1 is warranted. Examples of this might include new software, a change of content or course length and in some cases even a new textbook.

Another aspect of preparation has to do with repeat courses. They are courses that are taught simultaneously to more than one group. If the second group is in the same program and year of study the factor is called "Repeat B" and is 0.35. If the second group is in a different program or different year then its called a "Repeat A" and the factor is 0.45. Those individuals who teach a course open to a variety of

students in different programs and years of study may be entitled to the higher factor. Again, the factor is multiplied by the teaching hours to generate the appropriate preparation time for a course. Details about preparation factors are covered by Article 11;01D (1),(2),and(3).

Evaluation is divided into three types. The first is "Essay/project" has a factor of 0.03, the second "Routine or Assisted" has a factor of 0.015 and the third "In-Process" has a factor of 0.0092. In reverse order, "In-Process" refers to evaluation that occurs totally within the assigned teaching contact hour and a mark is assigned "on the spot". "Routine or Assisted" evaluation is a little ambiguous because the clause has no punctuation and can be read two different ways depending on where you would place a comma. Basically if the marking is done by machine or the college hires somebody to do your marking for you then it's considered "Routine or Assisted". In addition if the marking is "short answer", which we take to be true/false, fill-in-the-blanks or marking for which a template can be imposed then it is also "Routine or Assisted". By a process of elimination, all other marking falls into the category of "Essay or Project". This includes such marking as Mathematics (numerical essay) or Graphics (visual projects) etc.


There is a fourth possible factor, that of the combined factor that applies when the final grade is arrived at through a combination of evaluation methods with varying factors. In these cases the factor is apportioned in the same ratio as the allocation of the marking types to the final grade. If there is only one type of marking, then it must be one of the first three factors, as the college can not arbitrarily create a new factor.

The evaluation factor is multiplied by the number of students in a class and by the number of assigned teaching hours for that class to arrive at the attributed hours for

evaluation and feedback for that course.

The hours attributed for preparation and evaluation and feedback are the minimum you should receive. There may be situations in which you require additional attributed time. The SWF form includes two additional columns where this additional time can be recorded.

Resolving workload disputes: Article 11.02

 See flow chart on page 5

The actual process and time lines for resolving a workload complaint are covered in the accompanying flow chart. It is best to respond to a SWF within the required three days, although the College and the Union by agreement have never strictly adhered to the three day limit. This is partly due to the college's practice of just leaving SWFs in mailboxes rather than having the chairpersons personally hand each SWF to each faculty member and recording the date of issue. If you are in disagreement with the assigned workload, contact the union office at ext 2200 and discuss the issue with a steward. If you decide to proceed with the complaint, check-off the middle box at the bottom of the SWF referring the matter to the College Workload Monitoring Group (CWMG). The CWMG is comprised of 4 managers and 4 union representatives. A hearing will be scheduled and you,

Workload cont'd page 7

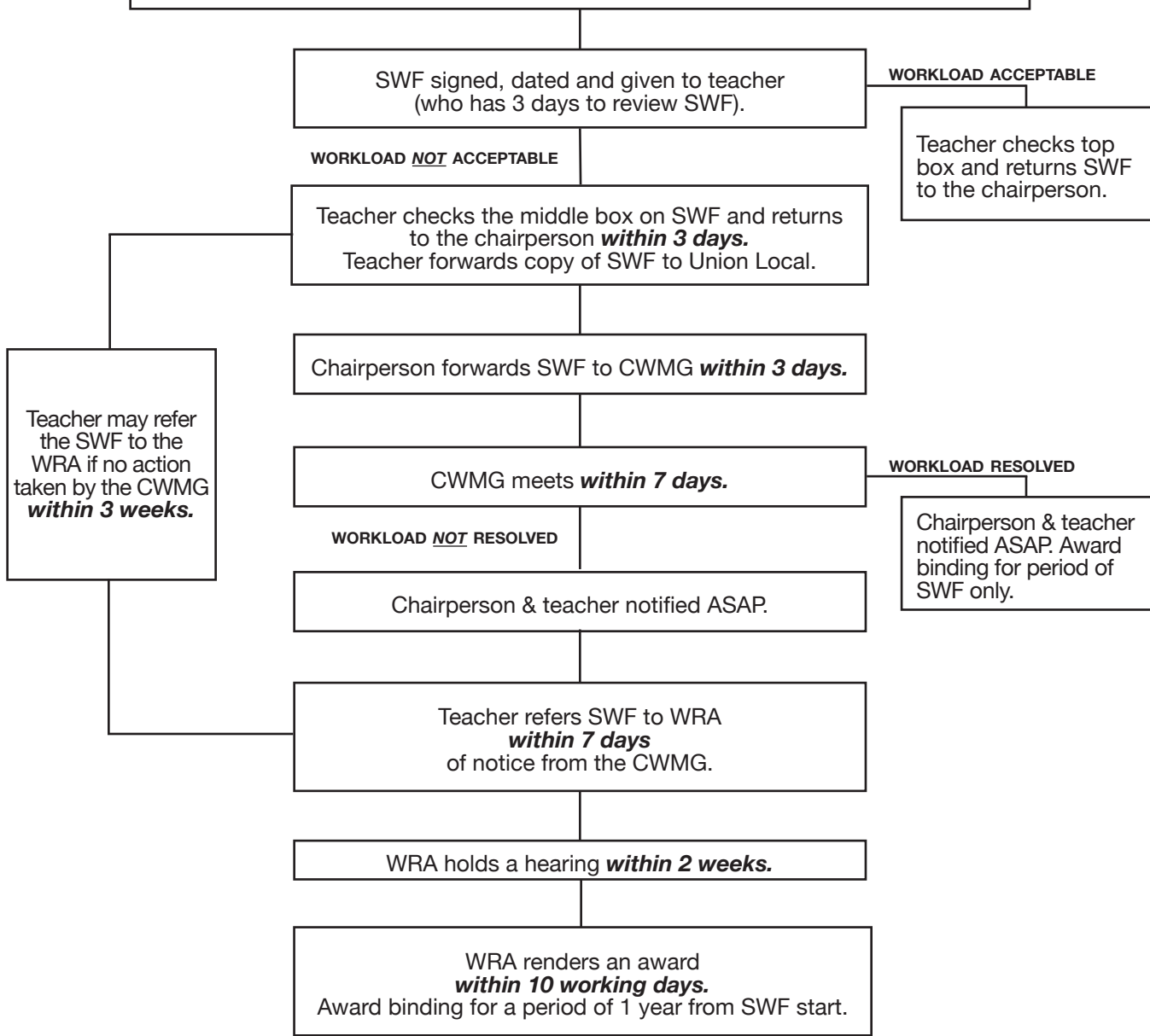
We want you to

ASK the Chief Steward 

Questions can be submitted to the VoLo Editor at opseu556@gmail.com
The Vocal Local will endeavour to answer all your questions here, space permitting.

ARTICLE 11 FLOWCHART FOR WORKLOAD RESOLUTION

11.02A1(a) Prior to the establishment of a total workload for any teacher the supervisor shall discuss the proposed workload with the teacher and complete the SWF, attached as Appendix 1, to be provided by the College...



Branding and the Politics of Colour

by Ed Ksenych

George Brown College has a new logo which has appeared (at least to most of us) out of nowhere. Between introducing a swirling orange “G” of George Brown with blue print (which the college community was asked to comment upon awhile ago) and December, someone added a spectral side bar.

All divisions have been granted a colour. My division is purple. But who painted us this way? And why? Maybe the whole idea signifies the college’s commitment to diversity. Or a trendy idea about enhancing organizational identity, solidarity, and cohesion. Don’t know. It wasn’t explained. There was no public discussion about it.

The trouble is, not only that it wasn’t properly presented and discussed, but that the decision to institute it carries a number of problematic consequences.

First, consider the financial consequences. Covering this rainbow spectrum will cost money... a lot of money. If I’ve understood correctly, the cost of producing a thousand busyness cards with the new multicoloured logo will be about \$90, compared to under \$30 without it in order to accommodate the array of colours. What’s pertinent to busyness cards is also pertinent to letterhead, envelopes, signage, and so on. How is it the college has money to commit to publicly presenting us in this extravagant way, but won’t commit significant money to hiring more human beings for full-time positions or improving the pay of the part-time human beings who are actually engaged in the educational work the college is symbolically presenting and marketing? This prioritizing of visual image over the people and education is problematic, is it not?

Second, all it will take is for the college to either introduce or eliminate a division

and the current spectrum will fall into visual and symbolic disarray. And such a change just occurred. Last year the college responded to the necessity and desirability of creating a Faculty of General Education and Access in order to contend with emerging provincial requirements, educational needs, and academic demands. Given that everything is in flux and adaptability is important, it seems foolish to commit the college organizationally through a display of colours to a particular organizational form—especially when the display of colours costs so much.

Third, the new logo encourages human beings to identify themselves with a colour for whatever reasons. As an institution committed to the noble idea of recognizing and understanding diversity, this is not a good move. The colour, of course, is

supposed to be symbolic (although for the life of me I can’t figure out what’s purple about me or what I do here.).

But attaching ourselves symbolically to colours and the sociocultural construction of their significance for our identity here is precisely the sort of thing we need to be challenging as part of promoting a healthy, productive approach to diversity, especially in an academic environment. The problem with this should be self-evident by now. I’ve not yet met a “white” person who was actually white, or a “black” person who was actually black. Nor have I ever met a “yellow”, or “red” human being. Sometimes we say we don’t care if someone’s green or blue in order to highlight the silliness of this way of thinking about and organizing ourselves

Branding *cont’d page 7*

THE GREEN CORNER

BE MY *Green* Valentine

Valentine’s Day is a day of love. We are all busy finding ways to tell that special someone that we care. Let’s not forget to take some time to love our planet. As you make your Valentine plans here are some possible ‘green’ ideas:

Buy a potted plant, rather than cut flowers. They last longer and give back carbon dioxide to the air. Many, such as chrysanthemums, can be saved and planted in the garden in the spring.

Look for gifts that have little or no packaging. Better yet, put your gift in a reusable, cloth bag.

Unique gifts can be purchased from

the World Wildlife Federation at wwf.ca. Imagine—you can ‘adopt’ an animal. While your beloved enjoys a cute, cuddly, stuffed toy, you will have contributed to help save an endangered species from extinction.

For more gift ideas check out treehugger.com/giftguide.

There is an endless list for anyone...

Remember, you can also:

Make sure the card you buy is printed on recycled paper with environmentally friendly inks.

Walk to a local restaurant for a nice romantic dinner.

Stay at home for that cozy meal. Use candles to save power and add romance.

We hope you enjoy a wonderful, green Valentine’s Day. Turn down the lights, turn down the heat and *cuddle up to the one you love.*



Post-Strike Return to Work Grievances Update

Three further days of hearings were conducted on December 11th, 12th and 13th. The arbitration panel heard from a further 4 teachers about their post strike workloads. All four were again articulate and presented their cases extremely well. The panel now has heard a cross-section of the types of workload issues arising from the period post-strike. On March 7th and 20th the panel will reconvene to hear the lawyers' summations and arguments regarding the preliminary objections. Once the preliminary objections are finally resolved the matter of actual compensation can be dealt with. Both Ted Montgomery and Damian Wiechula continue to work with OPSEU and the lawyers to resolve these grievances. *We'll keep you posted.* ▼

Branding *cont'd from page 6*

as people in a society. All of these are sociocultural fictions.

One approach to dealing with the diversity of human colours has been to celebrate them. But efforts at tolerating or celebrating them and so on, while preferable to demeaning, are actually flawed from the outset because they begin by accepting a sociocultural fiction in an attempt to overcome the negative consequences of having agreed to it in the first place. The point is to refuse to accept and to deconstruct its mistaken significance in the first place. But the new logo is promoting the value of identifying ourselves with colour. As such, it's unintentionally encouraging people in our college to participate in the very kind of mythic associating and thinking that has given rise to the very racism we as a college are collectively opposed to. While unintentional, it's still careless... even if it's a cute branding idea.

Finally, how did this alteration in the college logo occur without any input from

the multitude of vibrant, beautiful colours that are now being brandished in the college logo? From what I've encountered, we purples had no input in it. Not only this speck of purple, but any other speck of purple I've asked.

As for colours, what's the colour of truth, of know-how, of skill, inquiry, knowledge, imagination, justice, creativity, and other goods we're supposed to be advancing here? Or the colours of innovation, success and excellence, as articulated in our academic strategy? I certainly could see displaying such colours in branding ourselves, and would be willing to identify myself with all of them simultaneously.

So what's the upshot of all this? I'm not confident our Marketing and Communications Department know what they're doing. But I am certain they haven't communicated effectively with the people who have to live with the appearances they've so cleverly, and undemocratically, generated on our behalf. ▼

'Time' notes

**The information and statistics in this article have been compiled from:*

Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Organization [ACAATO]. (February 2006). Ontario Colleges: Building a unique 21st century competitive advantage.

Canadian Federation of Students—Ontario. (2007). CFS Ontario Website <<http://www.cfontario.ca>>

Organization of Part-time and Sessional Employees of the Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology [OPESE-CAAT] (Spring 2007). Compromising Quality: How Ontario is betraying its community college students—and the people who help them learn. ▼

Workload *cont'd from page 4*

with the help of a steward, can present your case to the committee for a decision. If the committee is unable to resolve the dispute, then the matter can be referred on to a Workload Resolution Arbitrator (WRA). At that hearing you, or if you wish the union can make the presentation. The decisions of the CWMG or the WRA are binding on both the college and the faculty member.

Many faculty are apprehensive about launching a workload complaint. The process of resolving workload is carried out in a non-confrontational manner and consists basically of having a dispute resolved by an independent third party, either internally by the CWMG, or externally, by the WRA. In either case, the workload issue will be resolved within the six-week period between the issuing of a SWF and the commencement of the course. ▼



OPSEU Local 556
George Brown College
PO Box 1015, Station B
Toronto, ON M5T 2T9
(416) 415-5000 ext 2200
opseu556@gmail.com

The Vocal Local is a publication of the George Brown College Faculty Union, OPSEU Local 556. It is intended to provide information and stimulate discussion among its members. We invite your participation and welcome your contributions. We reserve the right to edit for libel, length and clarity.

Send your comments, articles, letters to the editor, praise, etc. to:
VoLo Editor at opseu556@gmail.com



George Brown College Staffing & Enrolment 1995 – 2007

by Maureen Hynes and JP Hornick

This chart shows how faculty numbers have not recovered from the Harris cuts, while management numbers certainly have. Note how explosive the growth in student enrolment—and part-time faculty—has been. It seems that implementing the Harris cuts was a very handy way for the college to cut back, in a permanent way, on full-time faculty. Over the past decade, from 1998/9 to 2006/7, the number of full-time faculty has increased about 9%, support staff 36%, students 66%, and administration a staggering 74%! And that's not factoring in this year's student enrolment, which our administration has been boasting is going to top 14,000 for this year.

Year	Number of full-time Professors	Number of Administrators	Number of Support Staff	No. of P/T, Partial Load & Sessional Profs	Number of Students
1995 /96	671	87	530	460	7,979
1997 /98	460	70	336	592	8,326
2002 /03	446	97	364	476	9,344
2006 /07	471	134	458	555	12,102

**Administration
Up 74%**

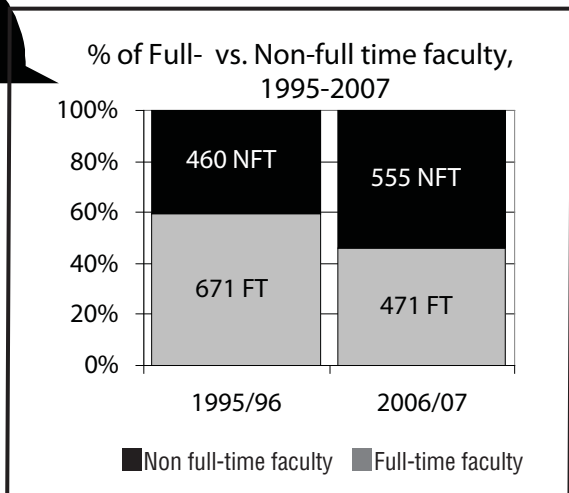
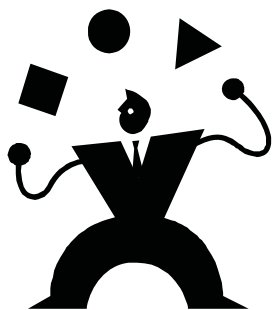
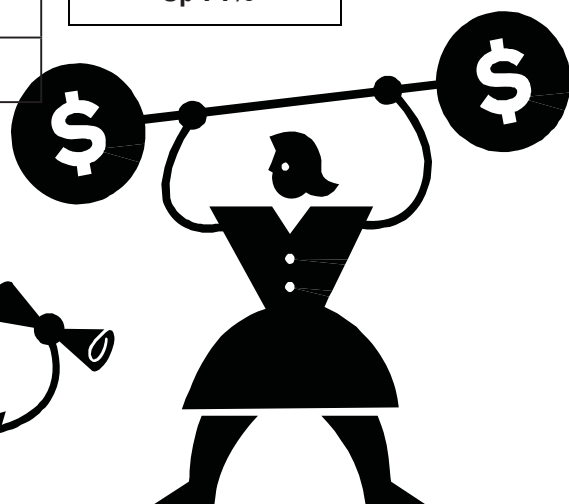
Who's Gotten Bigger?

GBC 1997 – 2007

**Support Staff
Up 36%**

**Students
Up 66%**

**FT Faculty
Up 9%**



Sources: 1987-1999 enrolment stats are from the Ontario Ministry of Education & Training and include CEIC sponsored students; 1999-2005 enrolment stats are from Colleges Ontario. Staffing levels stats are from the College Compensation and Appointments Council (formerly the Council of Regents), and the statistic re current enrolment is from Anne Sado, George Brown News, Sept 15, 2007