

**President’s Report**

**Annual General Meeting - April 26, 2017**

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your President this past year. It is a role I don’t believe you can ever be fully prepared for when you begin. That said, I approached my new role remembering Clark Kerr of UC Berkeley’s observation, the one thing that unites us is our common grievance over parking. I knew that, if things ever got out of hand, my default would be to draw everyone’s attention to the parking situation at VIU.

## Thanks

There is a lot to learn in the first year and I thank everyone who has been so patient with me as I have learned and continue to learn about the Presidency. In particular, I would like to acknowledge Marni, our past President who, after six years, left VIUFA in such great shape. I am grateful too that she is always willing to make time to offer guidance. I also want to thank Judy Benner, our Office Manager, who is always gracious when asked to accommodate yet another late report or change to an agenda. And I need to recognize Neil McLeod, our Labour Relations Advisor, who has the thankless task of either trying to rein me in or trying to make me understand the importance of something else. There’s a lot of truth behind my joking that VIUFA is the most efficient part of the University.

There are also innumerable support staff (CUPE members) who graciously arrange meetings, prepare agendas, keep minutes and assemble supporting documents for meetings with administrators. Their efforts allow us all to do all of our jobs and they deserve to be recognized.

Lastly, I need to thank the other members of the Executive who are so dedicated to working on your behalf. Russell Simmons’ advice that you “should surround yourself with people who are smarter than you” is absolutely true; this past year, I have gained much from my colleagues. A very special thanks to Eliza Gardiner and Kathy Page, both of whom are stepping down from the VIUFA Executive.

In contemplating what I should include in my annual report, I realize I can talk about both everything and nothing at all. I can speak to just about everything because so much crosses my desk; however, I don’t know nearly as much as the Officers who engage with members and the administration in detail. In light of this, I will reflect on the most significant, ongoing characteristics of the past year.

# Turnover in the Administration and in General

This past year, the University’s senior management team experienced a significant degree of turnover, in equal parts unexpected and expected.

There were a number of sudden departures from VIU’s upper management team. These were unsettling because they came out of nowhere and were difficult to make sense of. Apart from having to work in a vacuum, the worry was what this turnover would mean to our overall reputation in attracting qualified replacements.

In addition, there will be four new Deans. These retirements not only mean the loss of some long serving members of the community, they also represent a strain on our members who have to cope in the absence of predictable leadership.

Lastly, I could not discuss the loss of senior administrators without mentioning the significant number of members and support personnel retiring. The loss of so many colleagues who represent so much mentorship and such a deep connection to the University’s past, will be felt in many ways.

The net effect of this turnover means not only coping with uncertainty but also the added strain of sitting on search committees. Many of these result in failed searches, drawing the process out over much of a year and highlighting VIU’s competitive weaknesses. In light of this, a big thanks to all of the members who make the effort to serve on search committees to help find the best candidate(s).

# Governance

Through Labour Management, I have become involved in three subcommittees:

#### Revamping course evaluations

I will leave it to Laura Suski, our Chief Bargainer, to share with you the work done in this sub‑committee.

#### Introduction of Faculty Formative Self-Evaluation

This sub-committee has been formed to develop the means and resources for Faculty to engage in self-directed formative evaluation, in keeping with the 2015 Memorandum of Understanding. At this time, I can’t provide the membership with an timeframe for when this will be rolled out. My thanks to Gara Pruesse in helping me with this work.

#### Information related to discreet recording

This sub-committee has been struck to review the implications of the proliferation of recoding devices in our classrooms and offices. The goal is to have an information piece ready for the membership in the fall. My thanks to Colleen Price for volunteering to be a part of this sub-committee.

## Last Words

In closing, the sobering fact is that members of the Executive are unable to discuss much of the work they do to help members, help that ranges from the mundane to the profound. But I’d like to take this opportunity to tell you, the membership, you have an excellent Executive, all of whom are dedicated to ensuring the best for you. Any failings of VIUFA are mine alone. That said, I believe this past year to have been a successful one, after all, I never had to resort to talking about parking.

## Seeking Re-election

If allowed, I’d like to serve the membership by running for office again. With a year of learning behind me, I now have a better understanding how VIU and VIUFA function in relation to each other and how to affect change on behalf of the membership. There is important sub-committee work to complete. And there is work that needs to be done influencing FPSE and its relevance to individual members.

My last thought is to wish everyone a restful summer.

Respectfully yours,

Chris Jaeger

President, VIUFA