



## VIUFA FPSE Academic Governance Committee Representative

### 2023-24 Report

Dear fellow VIUFA members,

It has been my pleasure to serve as VIUFA's representative to FPSE's Academic Governance Standing Committee (AGC) for the past 12 months. When I was nominated, I admittedly had a very narrow understanding of what academic governance is and what a committee concerned with academic governance might do. I have learned a great deal. I encourage everyone to take part in the work of academic governance to better understand and engage with the decision-making bodies of our institution – at the department, faculty, institution, and sectoral levels.

The AGC committee has a broad mandate because academic governance shapes many different aspects of the university, including curricula and pedagogy, workload, and collective agreement language. This year I liaised between our association and the larger FPSE committee, to gather, share, and advance knowledge about collegial and/or academic governance systems, policies, and procedures at our respective institutions.

To that end, I attended two FPSE AGC meetings (one virtual meeting in October 2023, and one in-person meeting in Vancouver in January 2024). At the October meeting, discussion focused on micro-credentials and the potential implications of the [BC Provincial Government's Micro-Credential Framework](#) for faculty workload, compensation, and bargaining. A subcommittee was created to analyse the Framework document. This subcommittee's report offers a detailed critique of the government's framework and raises questions about the lack of concrete guidelines around how (and who) develops and governs micro-credentials at post-secondary institutions in British Columbia. Members of the committee expressed strong support for the idea that members of faculty associations who deliver non-standard or atypical academic credentials, such as micro-credentials, are compensated at the same rate. All agreed that such credentials also need robust review from academic governance bodies – they should not be outside existing systems of curriculum development. I would be pleased to address any questions you have regarding the report's recommendations to FPSE.

At the committee's January meeting, the representatives identified several issues of importance in addition to micro-credentials. Committee members shared information about the administration of, and fair access to, professional development leaves and funds. Many expressed a desire to explore ways of measuring and properly valuing governance work as part of workload. How are service obligations communicated in job descriptions? How do different institutions account for this work? How is the work of department, program, or committee Chairs described? Is it equitable? Representatives were also interested in continuing to consult with faculty about teaching modalities (online vs. hybrid vs. face-to-face). The committee's continued conversations on these topics will guide future rounds of bargaining.

Finally, over the past month I have recruited and guided the members of the Nominations Committee as the association prepares for annual elections. I want to thank Luke McLeod, Juliane Collard, and Evangelia Aleiferi for volunteering to serve in this capacity. I will close by thanking VIUFA's staff, Laura Buechler and Neil McLeod, for all their support.

Katharine Rollwagen