



FPSE WHSEC Representative

2023-24 Report

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your representative to the Federation of Post Secondary Educators Workplace Health, Safety, and Environment Committee (FPSE WHSEC) for the 2023/2024 year. It was my second term working in any role for our Faculty Association, and it continued to be a positive and encouraging experience.

I also extend a wholehearted thank you to Robin Boxwell for his consistent work representing VIUFA on Vancouver Island University's Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (VIU JOHSC), and to Chris Alemany who returned to the role this spring when I had to take an unexpected leave.

In the role as the FPSE WHSEC representative, I worked on behalf of VIUFA on two separate committees. I have identified highlights from each committee below.

FPSE WHSEC: This committee, made up of representatives from 20 participating locals throughout British Columbia, met twice during the year. I was unable to attend the early March 2024 on-line meeting but met with other FPSE representatives in November 2023.

- ***November 3/4, 2023 – FPSE Headquarters in Vancouver***
 - At this in-person session, representatives confirmed WHSECs 2023/2024 on-going committee objectives:
 1. Help members use the JOHS committee to ensure regulatory compliance.
 2. Support locals to focus on mental health and burnout.
 3. Support locals to ensure better harassment and bullying prevention and reporting through their local JOHS committee.
 4. Support locals in their requests for key air quality information.
 - This session also provided opportunity to work together on pressing issues across locals. One such issue was targeted violence on our campuses. To this end, the committee produced and passed a motion, for endorsement by FPSE's President's Council, encouraging all member institutions to ensure sensitive location information (e.g., date/time/location of course offerings) is password protected and only accessible to those who need to know (e.g., current students).
 - Note: After following up on this issue at our local JOHSC, I was pleased to learn that VIU was already moving in this direction to reduce the risk associated with violence targeted at specific demographic groups.

VIU JOHSC: This committee, made up of representatives from VIUFA, CUPE, BCGEU, VIUSU, administration, and VIU Health & Safety Officers, met each month. Items of interest discussed and reported out include:

- ***VIU Employee Safety Training Matrix – On-going***

- Work continues on the development of an institutional safety training matrix. The matrix will clearly identify which specific safety training, including frequency, is required for various roles within the institution, providing a better overall picture for Human Resources and the Health & Safety Office.
- ***New Incident Reporting System – Rolled Out and Operational***
 - VIU has successfully moved away from a “paper” or Word document-based incident reporting system and has fully adopted new custom-made software by Prismatic - <https://safetyincidents.viu.ca/dashboard> .
 - The new software has streamlined data input, allowing for consistent collection of information about safety-related incidents, and more meaningful interpretation and analysis of that data (e.g., the identification of incident trends or “hot spots”). The JOHSC is already benefitting from this improvement with more detailed monthly incident reports to inform committee discussion.
 - Under the new reporting system, employees self-report safety incidents through an on-line interface that requires employee log in. An automatic notification of the incident is then sent to managers, and when appropriate, a report will be generated to WorkSafe BC automatically.
- ***VIU Hazard Registry – On-going***
 - Led by the Health & Safety Office, a subcommittee of the JOHSC met during the winter term to complete a comprehensive hazard registry.
 - 66 existing or potential hazards, organized under the headings physical, biological, chemical, safety, or psychosocial, were identified and a risk assessment completed for each hazard. These assessments were used to identify the top ten hazard risks.
 - Health & Safety is now completing a hazard control gap analysis to determine what, if any, additional hazard controls are needed to address health and safety risks across all VIU campuses.

I would be pleased to answer any questions about the items raised in this report, or address any other concerns, and can be reached by email to Amber.Hieb@viu.ca or safety@viufa.ca.

Thank you again for the opportunity to serve our Faculty Association.

Submitted by Amber Hieb