



**VIUFA Year-End Report May 2021**  
**Educational Policy Committee**  
**Submitted by Kathleen Bortolin**

As VIU's Educational Policy Representative, I attended the fall meeting of this committee virtually in November 2020. During that meeting, the committee was apprised of President Council's areas of interest and determined collectively, and in light of PC's needs, a workplan for this group. This workplan included convening two separate committees to collect data and responses related to key policy issues across our sector that may have arisen during COVID. In particular, we agreed to look at policy related to online instruction, intellectual property and collegial governance.

As VIUFA's representative, I volunteered to lead the committee on how collegial governance was (or was not) demonstrated at member organizations throughout the COVID crisis. Our committees met over the next few months, creating questions for a survey that was distributed to local FPSE presidents. We are awaiting the responses, and once collected, the committee will analyze the data and share out. Our hope is to identify areas of strength and best practices related to how educational policy during COVID was collectively determined, and to what extent faculty across FPSE organizations had a say in those decisions.

It appears there were concerns at our institution and others regarding the extent to which collegial governance was demonstrated, and in what meaningful ways members were included in decision-making processes during COVID. At VIU, committees like the Academic Continuity Committee (ACC) and Future State Planning Committee (FSPC), were formed without VIUFA membership, despite various requests from the VIUFA executive to have a member present. Given that the terms of reference for the ACC state that their purpose is to "proactively determine various actions and policy and pedagogy/practice changes required to maintain academic programming in the context of COVID-19" it would seem reasonable to include a VIUFA member to support such a purpose. Furthermore, including a faculty voice on either the ACC or the FSPC could have shown a commitment to the tenets of collegial governance that our sector expects.

It is my hope that the FPSE survey related to educational policy will provide evidence of best practices, at VIU and elsewhere, that we can point to moving forward in order to ensure our membership voice continues to be included in decisions related to the policies that govern many of our practices.