

YUFA Negotiations Successful

Barb Taylor

Contract negotiations between the York University Faculty Association and the Administration came to an early and successful end on May 10.

Retirement language, salary equity, and classroom size were among the issues discussed. Because enrollment has increased by 22.5 per cent over the last two years, YUFA attempted to obtain contract language that would uphold the current practice of instructors limiting class sizes. But no progress was made in this area.

William Farr, Vice-President of Faculty and Student Relations

stated, "Deans trying to take additional students attempt to mitigate the situation by putting in extra sections." YUFA received a wage increase of 13.3 per cent, but YUFA Chairperson Janice Newson feels the "YUFA certainly hasn't caught up with inflation." She also argues the new wage does not compensate the faculty for its increased work load. The union also won additional support for day care and conference travel. Newson feels that retirement settlements are "currently a matter of individual wheeling and dealing." Given that many York faculty will be retiring in

the 80's, YUFA pushed hard for standardizations in this area. As a result of negotiations, Farr stated that "the administration is now required to address retirement 1.5 years in advance" and they are "currently considering establishing criteria."

Despite the successful negotiations, Newson feels "there are issues that we would like to see more progress on, such as class sizes, tenure and promotion, and work load."

Tropical Ecosystem Lures York Prof to Central America

Gary Fluxgold

Born and raised in the tropical climate of the West Indies, Martin Kellman, a Professor of Geography at York University, has an unyielding interest in the intricacies of tropical ecosystems. At present he is studying the interactions of grass, shrubs, trees and soil in the savannah areas of Belize, a small country in the Yucatan Peninsula of Central America.

A graduate of McGill and the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Kellman's current work has its origins in the professor's doctoral work at the Australian National University.

Now processing his data in Canada, Kellman says it was "theoretical interest" that led him and a group of graduate students to Belize. While Kellman specializes in the relationship between trees and the savannah, his students Kiyoka Miyonishi (Ph.D.) and Pamela Hiebert (M.Sc.) study the effects of fire on savannah shrubs and the grass layer, respectively.

Kellman's research of the savannah environment entails a detailed analysis of valuable forest crops. Over the years tropical forests have suffered due to mismanagement, and the loss of this valuable commodity can cause areas with low economic bases to suffer. In Belize, the economy is traditionally based on forestry, forest rehabilitation is fairly important.

Kellman believes, his work in Central America will give "results that with some modifications will be applicable to other areas as well." Calling the tropics "biologically unique and important", Kellman says this area is easier to study because of the rapid growth of its vegetation.

When Kellman came to York University, his work gained momentum from what the professor describes as an excellent chemical laboratory developed by Dr. Allen. With the aid of Allen's laboratory, Kellman investigates plant nutrients and the relevance of soil fertility to the ecosystem of the savannahs in Belize.

Kellman has received several grants from the NREC, and he may soon return to Belize.

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