



TEACHERS AND
STUDENTS
AGAINST AUSTERITY

The OWL HOOTS

Newsletter of the Dawson Teachers' Union Executive

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Insurance News

November is insurance-month

A reminder that from November 1st to November 30th, **you can modify your insurance coverage**. Modifications to medical insurance include increasing or decreasing coverage by opting for a different module. Teachers must remain in a module for three years before decreasing coverage.

Note that **this year only**, during the month of November, **teachers can enroll in the optional life-insurance plan without proof of insurability, even if they have previously been rejected**.

For more information concerning this year's modifications to the plan, you can refer to the most recent editions of Info-Insurance, available on the DTU website under the heading 'FNEEQ Info'.

For information regarding insurance coverage, the contract (#1008-001010) is available on the *La Capitale* website under 'Group Insurance' for individuals.

English Version of Collective Agreement Now Available

The 2015-2020 Collective Agreement has been translated to English and is now available on both the FNEEQ (fneeq.qc.ca/en/2015-2020) and DTU (dtu.qc.ca/Documents/TheCollectiveAgreement) websites.

Note that the French version is the official version of the contract

November 15 : VWR Deadline

The Voluntary Workload Reduction (VWR) Program allows full-time teachers with at least 3 years of seniority to reduce their workload by 10-60% while maintaining the rights of a full-time teacher.

Teachers interested in participating in the VWR Program **can contact the DTU** for information on how to proceed. The deadline to apply for participation in the Winter 2017 Semester is November 15th.

General Assembly passes motion in support of DTU's charges strategy for Cont'Ed

The College has not yet communicated its position on the use of the *charges* in Continuing Education - resources which were first announced last spring.

But the DTU executive has long since prepared a meticulous plan -- based on a negotiated principle of fairness, and developed in close collaboration with Cont'Ed teachers - for their optimal distribution¹.

The plan, which was circulated to members and to the administration in mid-September, was endorsed at the DTU general assembly on September 27th in the following motion:

Whereas

- Dawson College has 7.15 annual *charges à la formation continue* at its disposal beginning in the 2016-2017 academic year;

- the DTU executive, in consultation with Continuing Education teachers, has developed a model for the distribution of the *charges* to the disciplines based on 2014-2015 volume, with a corrective for disciplinary seniority as of November 2015;

- the '50-CI conversion' provision from 5-1.03(d) of the collective agreement poses a challenge to the intended use of the *charges* as equitable employment for Continuing Education faculty, notably by allowing teachers who would convert to full-time status in the absence of the charges to act as a sink for those charges;

- the DTU executive delivered a proposal ('Charges in Continuing Education: A Strategic Approach') composed of its *charges* distribution model, a rationale for its adoption, and a protocol for resolving the challenge posed by conversions to the Dawson College administration and to DTU members on September 16, 2016;

the DTU urges the Dawson College administration

- to work with the DTU executive to develop a suitable protocol for preventing the financing of conversions with the *charges à la formation continue*, e.g. the protocol outlined in section VIII of the above-named proposal;

- to adopt the distribution model presented in section VI of the above-named proposal along with any amendments deemed appropriate by both parties.

DTU Executive Council supports 'preferred names' initiative

On October 19 the DTU Executive Council adopted the following motion in support of a student-led initiative:

That the DTU Executive Council support the work of the Preferred Names Committee and affirm the right of students to indicate their preferred names to their teachers and to the College.

To facilitate this we request that Dawson implement means for students to indicate their preferred names easily and confidentially through Omnivox.

Director General disregards Senate, pushes Strategic Plan through BOG

On October 4th, the College unveiled its new strategic plan to the Senate.

After a lengthy debate on the occasion of its most recent meeting, the Senate recommended the approval of the strategic plan with the exception of the mission statement. It also requested that the Board of Governors delay the plan's approval in order to give senators the opportunity to develop an alternative mission statement.

Despite the Senate's request for a postponement, the College recommended a modified strategic plan to the Board of Governors on October 26th. The plan was approved without further amendments.

The DTU disapproves of the College's approach to the strategic plan's adoption. We remind the Director General that the opinion of the Senate should be held in the highest esteem, especially in view of its function as an elected advisory body.

The Board of Governors may be contacted in writing by any member of the Dawson College community, c/o Janet Pakulis (jpakulis@dawsoncollege.qc.ca).

¹ The distribution model can be consulted here: http://dtu.qc.ca/uploads/Documents/conted_charges_distribution_2016-2017.xlsx

The Council of Colleges: A bigger, badder CEEC?

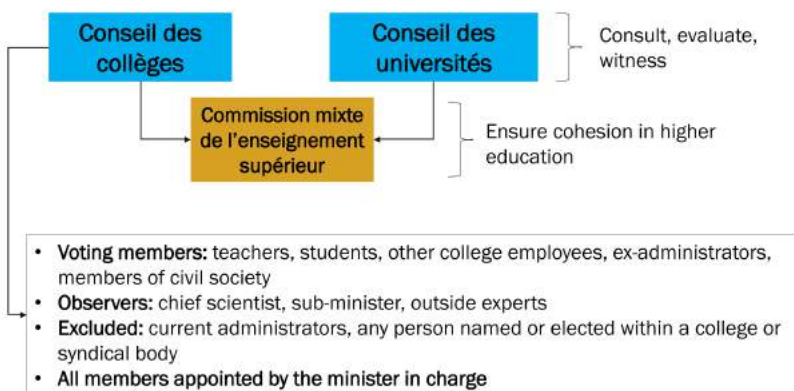
Government consultation likely a pretext for chipping away at the cégep model, promoting ‘à la carte’ education at reduced cost

Hélène David, the current minister in charge of higher education in Quebec, has launched a public consultation which will span the first two weeks of November beginning on October 31st. The stated goal¹ of the consultation is to “gather the most promising ideas concerning the college and university milieus in order to achieve the greatest benefit for our students.”

To that end, in September the minister put out a public call for memoranda addressing the proposals from two government documents: one concerning the creation² of a ‘council of colleges’, and another describing a parallel project for the university network.

These two structures (see the infographic below) would lack direct authority over the educational institutions they would be tasked to study. However, they would be expected to propose policy initiatives to the minister. Since one of the minister’s principal orientations is to promote cohesion in higher education, the council of colleges and the council of universities would each lend a subset of their members to a ‘mixed commission on higher education’.

Proposed structures



The council of colleges has at least three worrisome features in its proposed form. The first is that its members would be appointed by the minister. Equally important is that the council stands to exclude from its membership any teacher who serves in an appointed or elected role within a college. Finally, the council would subsume the role of the *Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial* (CEEC) - colloquially known as the cégep network’s ‘quality assurance’ body.

Considering that the minister’s proposal vaunts the independence of this eventual council, she should strive to constitute it as more than a simple government mouthpiece. She might make inroads in this direction by adopting a transparent and accountable process for selecting councillors. The majority of these individuals should be active stakeholders in the cégep network who, for example, might be elected to the council by their peers. The minister’s proposed exclusion is anathema to her stated intention: a teacher who serves their college community is arguably in the best possible position to make suggestions pertaining to its enrichment.

More irksome is the minister’s expressed desire to modify the *Règlement sur le régime des études collégiales* (RREC) to make the obtention of the standardized DEC (*diplôme d'études collégiales*) possible by the accumulation of local and unregulated AECs (*attestations d'études collégiales*). Coupled with its push for improving access to AECs and for making certain elements of general education mandatory in these programs, the government should feel hard-pressed to hide its ultimate intention: the incremental replacement of the cégep in its modern form by a decentralized ‘à la carte’ service - with significant savings accruing from the reduced employment cost of AEC teachers.

On October 6th and 7th, the DTU executive studied the implications of the minister’s proposal as part of a wider discussion with our partners at the FNEEQ (*Fédération nationale des enseignantes et des enseignants du Québec*). The debate on the floor of the *Conseil fédéral* centered on the appropriate political response from the FNEEQ, and consequently on the tone and content of its memorandum. Specifically, the discussion broached how open the federation should make itself to the idea of a council of colleges, provided that certain stringent conditions are met. The FNEEQ executive sees an opportunity to use the council and the RREC to bring ballast to the AEC, which has the status of a runaway problem within the network.

But to avoid a bigger, badder CEEC, the council would have to primarily be an organization of teachers, for teachers -- not another misguided attempt to transpose the industrial notion of 'quality' onto the sphere of education. (See the FNEEQ's flyer³ on the related council of universities for an idea of what else this would entail.) Although several member unions vehemently objected to the creation of any council, the final FNEEQ memorandum⁴ reflects a compromise.

It is tempting to conclude, at least provisionally, that the government is out to launder an essentially ideological project with the legitimizing scent of an apparently authentic consultation. But if their interest does indeed lie in improving the modern cégep, and not at discombobulating it in service to the idea of a 'market-driven' education at reduced cost, then they will heed the FNEEQ's concerns and act accordingly.

In the meantime, the DTU executive will stay apprised of the situation and will make provisions to mobilize, if that action should become necessary. As always, this political game brings with it tremendous risk, but also the possibility of genuine progress.

For More Information

- <http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/dossiers-thematiques/consultations-sur-lenseignement-superieur/>
- <http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/dossiers-thematiques/consultations-sur-lenseignement-superieur/conseil-des-colleges-du-quebec/>
- Participate by filling out the questionnaire here: <https://www7.education.gouv.qc.ca/dc/consultation/index.php?L=en>

¹ Translated from the text at: <http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/dossiers-thematiques/consultations-sur-lenseignement-superieur/>

² <http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/references/publications/resultats-de-la-recherche/detail/article/projet-de-creation-dun-conseil-des-colleges-du-quebec-ainsi-que-dune-commission-mixte-de-lense/>

³ http://fneeq.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/cuq_ang.pdf

⁴ https://www.csn.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/2016-11-01_-memoire_CEQ_CSN.pdf