



Vol. 1, no. 1
March 2016

Welcome to the DFA's *News You Can Use*



This is the first issue of the DFA's new monthly e-bulletin, "News You Can Use". Each month, we'll be highlighting not only DFA news, but also other articles of interest to Dalhousie academic staff. We'll have news on trends in post-secondary education from across Canada and around the world, what's happening at other universities and much more. If you have news we can use, contact us at communications@dfa.ns.ca.

How Dalhousie spends its money: the update

On February 25, the DFA held a special meeting to discuss how Dalhousie's budgeting practices were affecting teaching, research, the quality of student life and the university as a whole. A highlight of the meeting was the release of the update to the DFA's 2013 Review of Dalhousie University Finances. The update, which incorporates key data from 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15, shows that the trends in the original report have continued unabated: the proportion of operating expenditures spent on academics is continuing to decline, while the proportion spent on such areas as administration and facilities management is increasing.

For those Bargaining Unit Members who couldn't attend the meeting, the DFA is holding a series of local

"drop-in" meetings in different locations this month. [Click here](#) for more information.

Click the link on the right to read the report.

[Click here](#)

Improving university governance: the view from CAUT

"Universities and colleges face a crisis of bad governance," writes Robin Vose, President of the Canadian Association of University Teachers, in the latest issue of the CAUT Bulletin. According to Dr. Vose, there are clear alternatives to the bureaucratic, top-down form of governance that are all too common in our post-secondary institutions. Click the link to find out more.

[Click here](#)

OCUFA releases opinion poll on precarious academic work

The Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA) has released a new public opinion poll examining attitudes to precarious work in Ontario universities. The poll shows that 94 per cent of Ontarians believe that "universities should be model employers and support good jobs in their communities" and that 88 per cent say part-time professors should be converted into full-time positions. Click the link for more information.

[Click here](#)

Building a bridge between engineering and the humanities

Today's university environment hasn't been easy on the humanities, once viewed as the core of a university education. A recent [CBC investigation](#) showed a significant decline in the number of undergraduates in Maritime universities majoring in humanities disciplines. And in many Canadian and U.S. universities, funding for the humanities has declined while funding for engineering and other STEM disciplines has increased. But according to a recent article in the Chronicle of Higher Education, there needs to be a greater intersection between STEM and the humanities. Click the link to read the article.

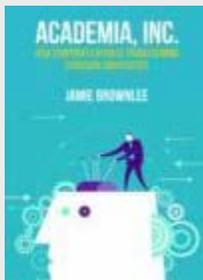
[Click here](#)

Students with "consumer mindset" get lower grades: U.K. study

Students who view themselves as "consumers" rather than "learners" tend to perform more poorly academically, says a new study published in the United Kingdom. The study, based on a survey of 608 students in 34 UK universities, found that "a higher consumer orientation was associated with lower academic performance. The students were presented with "consumer" statements like "I think of my university degree as a product I am purchasing" and "learner" statements like "I want to expand my intellectual ability" and asked to rate them on a seven-point scale. Click the link to find out more.

[Click here](#)

Books You Can Use: *Academia Inc.*



Corporatization: what is it, why is it happening and how is it affecting Canadian universities? These are some of the issues explored by sociologist and political economist James Brownlee in his recent book, *Academia Inc.: How Corporatization is Transforming Canadian Universities*. From the commercialization of research to the increased dependence on contract academics, Brownlee argues that universities are looking and sounding more like corporations, to the detriment of the quality of education. Click the link to find out more. .

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