

THERESA BIANCO

Position Statement – Member-at-Large

Challenges facing CUFA

The biggest challenge facing CUFA is fostering member solidarity. The Employer has taken drastic measures affecting our members and is moving forward with a reimaged budget model that will shape how resources are allocated across Concordia. These decisions will have lasting implications for our working conditions and the university's academic mission. CUFA must be strong, focused, and fully supported by an engaged membership if it is to represent faculty interests effectively.

Unfortunately, our membership is fractured, with internal discord stalling progress, eroding our soft power, and discouraging full member participation and engagement. When persistent bickering gets in the way of working collectively toward shared goals, CUFA's ability to advocate effectively on behalf of members is diminished – we lose leverage, and inevitably the membership loses. Rebuilding trust and engagement within the membership is therefore essential. If we want to be able to count on members to mobilize when needed, we must engage them first. There is no mobilization without engagement.

As Member-at-large, I will work to strengthen communication across the membership and help foster a culture of respectful and productive debate. Disagreement is inevitable in any democratic organization, but it should lead to better decisions—not deeper divisions. If CUFA is to meet the challenges ahead, we must move beyond internal battles and refocus on what matters most: protecting the interests of faculty and strengthening our collective voice.

What I bring to CUFA

Experience and continuity are particularly important at a time when we our Association and University are facing significant disruption. As the incumbent Member-at-Large, I bring a wealth of experience gained from two mandates on the CUFA Executive, representing CUFA at provincial (FQPPU) and national (CAUT) faculty associations, and serving as EDI Chair and member of the Joint Equity Committee, Joint Grievance Committee and also as a grievance officer. I am currently serving on the Board of Governors (2nd mandate), Senate, and the Standing Committee on Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Violence. Holding these roles concurrently has afforded me unique insight into how CUFA can most effectively advance the interests of its members. It has also allowed me to build constructive working relationships with members of the Administration, which can be valuable when pursuing CUFA's objectives through dialogue and strategic engagement. My goal in serving on these bodies is always the same: to ensure that the voice and concerns of all CUFA members are clearly represented.