

FQPPU

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
PRIORITIES FOR ACTION
IN 2007-2008

SEPTEMBER 2007

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE PRIORITIES FOR ACTION IN 2007-2008

REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES IN 2006-2007

COLLOQUIA

DISCUSSION, DEBATES AND RESEARCH DOCUMENTS

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE PRIORITIES FOR ACTION IN 2007-2008

As the Executive Committee starts with a fresh mandate, we take this occasion to announce our priorities for 2007-2008 and also to review briefly our activities during the last year. The review precedes our action plan for 2007-2008.

REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES 2006-2007

The review of last year's activities is organized under the following headings : colloquia / discussion, debates and research documents / direct support to members / communication, partnerships and participations.

COLLOQUIA

FQPPU organized two colloquia in 2007. *From dream to reality : doctoral studies and the professoral career* was held in March, 2007, when over a hundred participants met and confirmed the relevance and ongoing need to document a topic which, the year before, had been the subject of a research report. A summary of the colloquium discussions was posted online and sent to all new professoral recruits in the Quebec university network.

In May of 2007, the Federation held its annual colloquium under the aegis of the ACFAS Conference, on the theme *ITC and the production and diffusion of knowledge : issues for professoral work*. While providing a forum to explore the many issues and concerns on this topic, the colloquium also gave participants an opportunity to come to grips with the importance of « open access » systems, as they relate to developing communication networks, access to information and to education, and to maintaining academic freedom in the university.

DISCUSSION, DEBATES AND RESEARCH DOCUMENTS

Conseil Fédéral meetings permit member associations to exchange news on workplace labour relations, to discuss the conditions and context of professoral work, and to get a picture of emerging trends. Apart from the topics already mentioned above, the three Conseil Fédéral meetings in 2006-2007 also provided an opportunity to explore, thanks to invited guest speakers, questions about education and the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), on intellectual property, and the governance and management of the university.

Discussions held during the Conseil Fédéral meetings make clear our members' expectations in matters of research and follow-up of initiatives. In 2006-2007, we undertook to compile and analyse statistics on university financing and research funding, mainly under the direction of the Comité sur le financement des universités (CFU). With the help of research assistants, the President of the CFU completed the work and at the start of this year, the executive committees of each member association will receive a report giving a statistical portrait of the financial situation in their own university, along with comparative figures for the Quebec university network as a whole.

Statistics were also collected on successful applications for research grants from granting agencies, at the federal and provincial level. The results showed the importance of pursuing research into this topic, and developing closer co-operation in this area. This topic is one of our priorities for this coming year.

DIRECT SUPPORT TO MEMBERS

In the winter of 2007, FQPPU organized and held a training session for union executive members who are responsible for receiving and dealing with complaints of psychological harassment from their members. This session was greatly appreciated.

The Executive Committee began circulating print copies of presentations given during the « round table » discussions at Conseil Fédéral meetings, as well as compiling comparative statistics requested by delegates from member unions and associations.

Responding to the experiences of the Syndicat des professeures et professeurs de l'Université de Sherbrooke (a threatened lock-out), the Association of Professors of Bishop's University (a 6 week strike by support staff), as well as the effects of the financial crisis at UQAM, the Executive Committee took the following actions : communiqués of support, support in person on the picket lines, and a special meeting.

COMMUNICATION, PARTNERSHIPS AND PARTICIPATION

During the course of 2006-2007, three issues of the *Bulletin de la FQPPU/FQPPU Newsletter* appeared with the help of Roger de la Garde and were translated into English. They are available online through the FQPPU website and were sent electronically to all member associations for distribution to their members, as well as to media, university partners, governmental organizations and political representatives both inside and outside Quebec.

The Executive Committee sent out press releases on the topics of federal transfers, the budget proposals of both the Quebec and the Canadian governments, tuition fees, university research, GATS, workplace conflict in the university, and the financial crisis at UQAM.

One of the main elements in the policy-making and partnership initiatives of FQPPU was the announcement, at the end of 2006, of the Quebec government's strategy for research and innovation. This motivated FQPPU to join forces with the Fédération du personnel professionnel des universités et de la recherche (FPPU), l'Association des chercheur(e)s professionnel(le)s (ACPQ) and the Conseil national des cycles supérieurs (CNCS- FEUQ); the Fédération also had an open letter published in *Le Devoir* on February 8, written by Pierre Hébert, on "*The Quebec strategy on research and innovation : a hoax which threatens university autonomy in Quebec*". As a follow-up, FQPPU coordinated a joint action with the FPPU, ACPQ and FEUQ : an announcement in the University Research special issue of *Le Devoir* (March 24, 2007); a mini dossier « Protect public research » sent to Normand Thériault, special issue editor, and an interview with Léo Guimont also for publication in the issue. The topic was taken up again in an article published at the start of the school year in *Le Devoir* following an interview with Réginald Harvey.

Other open letters originating from FQPPU were also published : *Tuition fees in Quebec : time for a public debate* by Cécile Sabourin (*Le Devoir*, April 27, 2007) and by Pierre Hébert, *Lock-out averted at Université de Sherbrooke : an unacceptable hostile act which must never happen again* (*Le Devoir*, June 14, 2007).

FQPPU actively participates in the work of the *Table des partenaires universitaires* (TPU) which includes representatives of labour and student organizations from the university sector. In November 2006, coordinated by the TPU, a *Joint Declaration from the Partners of Higher Education*, calling for an immediate increase in federal transfers elicited support from twenty university and college labour union organizations. In August of 2007, FQPPU delivered two presentations to the Forum social québécois during the TPU workshop on *The impact of the private presence in the universities*.

On the Canadian scene, the Federation took part in CAUT Council meetings (Canadian Association of University Teachers) and the CAUT Women's Conference. The President attended meetings of francophone and bilingual unions and meetings of the Women's Caucus, all held during the twice-yearly Council meetings. During the main sessions, she gave oral presentations on the research interests and other activities of FQPPU. In another forum, the Public Education Network (PEN/REP) unites Canadian

labour organizations which are actively defending education public. FQPPU took part in three out of their four meetings held during 2006-2007. The network plays an important role now, against the attacks currently being mounted against education as a public service, defending the integrity of the universities, and continuing to push for adequate federal transfers. We have made several presentations to the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) and to the federation's Council demanding the highest possible level of federal transfers, and the exclusion of education from all negotiations under GATS. The difficulty now, however, is to renew these demands and to jointly advocate other topics which have been identified by our members as high priority, notably responsibility and open access to accounts in education matters.

On the international scene, FQPPU was represented at the 5th International Education World Congress and at the Higher Education Caucus which preceded it (July 2007 – Berlin), as well as at the preparatory meetings of the regional bodies for North America and the Caribbean (January 2007 – Jamaica, March 2007 – San Diego, March 2007) and OECD countries (February 2007 – Vancouver). FQPPU has continued these discussions to actualize a project of collaboration with labour organisations from francophone countries.

PRIORITIES FOR ACTION 2007-2008

Our first priorities, especially financing for universities and university research and the professoriate, will continue to be supported at the level of research, writing and publishing. That of university organization and administration will become increasingly important given the current situation in the universities. We must concentrate on advancing these issues to support FQPPU's public activities dealing in these matters.

Other concerns continue to need close attention. This is particularly the case with workplace relations and psychological harassment, which are among the chief concerns of our member associations. The situation for women in the university and information technology and communication are two concerns which will require the Executive Committee and its various associated bodies to take specific action, which will be defined in the first months of the new year. Finally, there are the international aspects which are in a separate class, and affect most aspects of university life.

In the following pages, each of these topics is briefly introduced with a reminder of its relevance, followed by a statement of actions which the Executive Committee intends to take on the matter during 2007-2008.

The action plan is divided into four (4) major areas of concern : the university, the workplace, FQPPU and international issues.

« THE UNIVERSITY »

University financing

There is general agreement in Quebec on the need to increase university funding. Debates on methods of doing so reveal a wide divergence of opinion. In order to continue to contribute effectively to this debate, the Executive Committee of FQPPU relies on the work of its Committee on University Financing. Based on analyses of individual institutions and a global survey of Quebec university budgets, the Committee will pinpoint specific areas of inquiry to be addressed to the Ministry of Education, Leisure and Sports (MELS) and to the Conférence des recteurs et des principaux des universités du Québec (CREPUQ); the information obtained will complete our statistics and give us a more precise knowledge of the evolution of university financial matters since the serious cutbacks of the 1990s.

The second phase of this work will also articulate the expectations of our member unions and associations, particularly in the area of organizational and university administrative practices, which have been visibly changing in recent years. Conseil fédéral members will be invited to communicate their expectations at the next meeting this autumn. An overall report will appear in the spring of 2008.

Let us keep in mind that the active cooperation of all members is essential for a complete picture of all areas relating to the future of university funding.

Professoriate

Following our successful colloquium held in the spring of 2007 on the topic of integration into an academic career, the Executive Committee will enlarge the question by making the theme of the professoriate one of its priorities and will rely on the committee formed to deal with this matter.

It is generally recognized that the available statistics on the university professoriate are incomplete, and those that are available do not always answer the needs of FQPPU and its members. In order to begin to remedy this situation, the Executive Committee, in consultation with the Committee on the Professoriate, will proceed with a survey of all Quebec professors ; the survey will give very useful statistics permitting a full picture of specific issues concerning professoral renewal and the experiences of new professors in the university, and more broadly, of all issues concerning working conditions and collective bargaining .

The survey is currently being prepared, and will be sent to all professors over the course of this coming winter. Its goal is to compile a database of quantitative measures concerning various aspects of professors' professional experience and on their workload. The survey will be contracted out to a company which will send it out electronically. All the rest of the work will be done by members of the working group with the cooperation of FQPPU member unions, which will be solicited by FQPPU to facilitate contact with their members.

The results of this research will be made available at an international colloquium on the future of the universities which FQPPU plans to hold in the fall of 2008.

The survey is part of a larger programme established by the Committee on the Professoriate (CCP). There will be a followup publication, currently in progress, to the qualitative research report on *Renewal of the professoriate in Quebec universities (2006)* which was produced for FQPPU. Frédéric Deschenaux and Nathalie Dyke will highlight these research findings in an article elaborating what the personal testimonials reveal about professoral work and about universities. They will work closely with the other Committee members on a research programme studying professional integration in academia and the integration of doctoral graduates into various careers. The Executive Committee will support this project over the course of the year.

University research, policies and structural impacts

Public policies on university research, a matter of growing importance for the Executive Committee last year, have been the subject of research and analyses, media pronouncements and joint action. The work already completed so far has shown the need for greater understanding in order to intervene vigorously on the topic.

FQPPU's credibility rests on its ability to prove that its positions are backed up by solid documentation. Given the resources available to FQPPU, the Executive committee proposes in 2007-2008 to consolidate the coalition « Protéger la recherche publique » which was formed to speak out against the consequences of applying the government's policies on university research and professoral work. They intend to produce an overview of findings to date on this topic, and to investigate, along with the Committee on University Financing, the possibility of producing a report on the current situation in Quebec universities, using FQPPU's own statistical resources. The Executive is aware that this is a very big project and will begin by establishing baselines for future years.

In concrete terms, the Executive Committee will collect and publish data on issues related to the effects of policies and funding programmes for research on universities and the academic workplace. It will continue to work with other organizations sharing similar concerns in order to develop joint initiatives and, where possible, extend this collaboration to organizations outside Quebec.

University organization and administration

Recent events touching directly on Quebec universities along with our own observations over the last several years of organizational changes in the universities make it ever more vital for FQPPU to take specific action on what is known as « university governance ». The Federation needs in particular to review and consolidate its positions in the light of the current situation. The Executive Committee proposes to hold a one day seminar this fall to stimulate in-depth discussions which will provide the basis for a policy platform to be shaped and approved at a Conseil fédéral meeting.

Concurrently, the Executive Committee will continue to collect and collate the facts on the situation in the universities. Members' concerns articulated in this process for an important part of the work which the Committee on University Financing will undertake in the second phase of its work.

As always, the Executive Committee will respond to the expectations of its members in this matter.

« THE WORKPLACE »

Labour relations

Information sharing, reports, and developing joint action in labour relations is undoubtedly FQPPU's *raison d'être*. In order to enhance its role in facilitating discussion, the Executive Committee has begun systematically to record information exchanged during Conseil fédéral meetings and data on topics of common interest in the form of comparative charts. It intends to continue this practice and to make the records available as quickly as possible after the meetings. These documents will be accessible on FQPPU's website and will be archived.

In response to the wishes expressed by several members, the Executive Committee plans to draw up a resource list of retired professors who are willing to lend their expertise to executive committees, negotiation teams and others. It will institute the most efficient methods to make information on collective agreements and arbitration decisions, etc., available to members. As well, the Executive committee in collaboration with the unions involved, will work to share information on resolved or current grievances. This information will be reserved for FQPPU members only.

Psychological harassment

The Executive Committee believes that the work already begun on recognizing the types of instances of psychological harassment in the universities and the consequent representational responsibilities for faculty associations must be followed up by regular reminders. Both association executives and the professoral body are subject to constant turnover, and need to maintain vigilant prevention programmes, ever alert to the contexts and factors which facilitate harassment behaviours.

For its part, the Federation must gather data and make relevant information available to those members who work in this field. In 2007-2008 the Executive Committee will consider the possibility of producing a study on the university situation three years after the legislation against psychological harassment took effect. This will be a joint study and will be defined during the fall of 2007.

From time to time the President has been informed by professors of ongoing psychological harassment cases in the universities, where the individuals involved were not satisfied with the reaction of either the

university administration or the faculty association. Relaunching regular awareness campaigns on the need for prevention of harassment in the workplace would ensure that such matters are followed up.

The Executive Committee will oversee the production of a *Guide to responsibilities concerning psychological harassment*, intended for association officers who deal with complaints lodged by their members.

Women in the university

Since the abolition of FQPPU's standing committee on women in the university, this subject has become a secondary concern among all FQPPU activities. The Executive Committee, however, continued to keep abreast of the debates and information concerning women in the university and the specific problems of women's working conditions, notably through the conference organized the CAUT Women's Committee in the spring of 2007. It believes that it is time for the Federation to refocus on goals and activities related to this issue.

The Executive Committee intends to define its goals during 2007-2008 relying on the experiences and concerns which were articulated by the Quebec participants in the Conference of spring 2007. Chief among them were the work-family life balance, salary equity, and the defense of feminist issues in the university. A further meeting will be held to work out a programme for action.

Information technology and communication (ITC)

Information technology and communication has long been a concern for FQPPU members. However, the growing importance of ITC in matters relating to knowledge and access to information in the university – internal and external communication for administration, for teaching and research, distance education, etc. – make it urgent that FQPPU define its role and policies in dealing with the various aspects concerning ITC.

Discussion held during the colloquium *ITC and the production and diffusion of knowledge; issues for professoral work*, made it clear that FQPPU has a relevant role to play through activities and such, in raising awareness among its member unions about problematic issues, the promotion of « open access » systems in universities, inclusion of ITC issues in negotiations and labour relations in the universities, as well as changes in FQPPU's internal practices.

As this is a large and complex issue, the Executive Committee proposes an action plan extending over several years, with the priority in 2007-2008 being the awareness of its members on the many ways in which ITC has infiltrated all aspects of university life, and the necessity for workplace relations and collective agreement negotiations to deal with ITC. Collaboration will be vital in order to advance this work.

AXE « FQPPU »

Representation

In order to fulfill FQPPU's political role, the Executive committee will continue to lobby representatives of political bodies at both the provincial and federal levels. The level of activities concerning the base funding of universities will be maintained, while activities concerning government policies on research will be accentuated. The growing importance of the Federal government as a source of funding directed towards the university sector forces FQPPU to review its strategies concerning all interventions at the federal level. At the international level, FQPPU will engage in activities directly related to concerns identified in the International Issues section.

FQPPU will continue to collaborate with its partners as well as with networks which promote information sharing, discussions, joint action and activities concerning university issues. The Executive Committee intends to favour contact and joint action with those partners which share its values and concerns, especially on the topic of teaching, research and university funding. It will cooperate as much as possible with activities which have been jointly planned with other partners in the field of education and the role of education in the development of society. During 2007-2008, the Executive Committee of FQPPU will look at the need to articulate the terms of collaboration and affiliation with other organizations which are involved with the preservation of public services.

Communication

Communications are the principal means by which FQPPU fulfills its political mission. In 2007-2008, the Executive Committee will make a priority of its relations with the media, drawing on its communications plan based on its priority issues and public targets.

Recognizing the importance of reaching a variety of audiences (the media, political bodies, university administrations, partners, labour organizations, members, etc.), the Executive Committee is aware of the need to vary the format of its messages to suit the audience. It will continue to publish regular communiqués and open letters on issues which concern the university sector. It will intervene judiciously on any topic which calls for a position statement from the Federation. It will distribute Federation position statements and publications. When invited to do so, it will make the Federation's point of view heard in radio and television broadcasts or in other public events.

All communications will be readily available on the FQPPU website, now more user-friendly and offering a members-only section with space for collaborative work. This will continue to be used as the focal point for internal and external communication, and for making available all FQPPU bulletins, communiqués, open letters, etc. The Executive Committee proposes to include also the text of opinion statements from professors, information sheets, and facts relating to all aspects of university and teaching academic life.

It will produce an audio-visual work on the theme *The university and its challenges : Professors' opinions on the university* (working title) in order to publicize the role of the university in Quebec society and the values and principles which characterize it: university autonomy, academic freedom, collegiality, university contributions to society's development, critical function, etc. This production will be offered to the Canal Savoir, will be made available to unions to welcome their new members and be accessible on the FQPPU website.

FQPPU's development

The Executive Committee reaffirms its commitment to enhance the development and the recognition of FQPPU, because the vitality of an organization is the foundation of the quality of its actions. In order to facilitate desirable changes, it will propose, when necessary, modifications to the Federation's statutes and policies.

Maintaining direct relations with members, through traditional channels such as Conseil fédéral meetings and working committees, remains a basic priority. The Executive Committee will continue to focus on research, information-sharing and discussions to formulate FQPPU policies, and will publicize these using all means and media available.

It is increasingly essential to collaborate with other organizations for specific goals and activities. With this in mind, in the coming year the Executive Committee will examine various ways to set up such collaborations, for example by inviting professors (either ex-officio, on sabbatical, or nearing retirement) to make their expertise available to FQPPU and, if needed, offering a suitable compensation, such as retaining their services as consultants on individual issues, or possibly offering research support grants.

« INTERNATIONAL ISSUES »

It is the conviction of FQPPU that international issues bear directly on the daily reality of universities, both in Quebec and in most countries around the world, although professors might not always be aware of these influences. Through its participation in different coordinating and consulting bodies, and through its affiliation with Education International, FQPPU keeps itself aware of the changing international scene. The Executive Committee will take such action as is within its powers, at the right time.

Internationalization and globalization of education

Universities and professors have always valued internationalization, in the form of learned exchanges and free movement of those working in the university sector. Economic globalization, however, is currently changing the conditions within which such exchanges and mobility occur.

Commercialization of educational services and the negotiation of commercial treaties, whether the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) or bilateral and regional treaties, threaten to undermine recognition of educational activities and university research as public services. Furthermore, in order to advance difficult negotiations, a new level of negotiation has been introduced in the last few years dealing with internal regulations. This new approach aims to set up agreements controlling the rights of various levels of government to legislate. If such agreements are allowed, the rights and the responsibility of governments to legally protect the status of education as a public service could be at stake. The Executive Committee will continue to co-operate with its partners in Quebec, in Canada and abroad, to ensure the preservation of universities as a public service.

Solidarity with higher education associations and unions

Solidarity among labour organizations around the world has never been so important, given the severe inequities in working conditions for professors in different countries. Following up on an initiative in progress, FQPPU will take a leading role in solidarity with their counterparts in francophone labour organizations. *Reinforcement of union purview over teacher mobility and staff participation in university teaching evaluations*, a project of the Comité syndical francophone de l'éducation et de la formation (CSFEF), will begin operations this fall. The first phase will be to gather data from all participating organizations on the issue of mobility, which will result in an overall portrait of the situation which can be further refined in national seminars. A summary of national meetings and recommendations will follow, and will be presented at a symposium to be scheduled as part of the Francophonie activities in Quebec in the fall of 2008. This meeting will also see the launch of the second phase of the project, which deals with the reinforcement of union purview in the area of university teaching evaluations.

Members' awareness

The Executive Committee will make it a priority to disseminate information which stresses the importance for FQPPU to participate in international dialogues on the future of universities, and to develop joint initiatives with labour organizations elsewhere in the world. The Federation will publish a special issue of the *FQPPU Newsletter* on international issues. It also intends to hold an international colloquium on the future of the universities, with the theme and organizing committee members to be determined this fall.

ANNEX 1

PRIORITIES, COLLABORATORS AND PARTNERS, INTENDED AUDIENCE

PRIORITIES	COLLABORATORS AND PARTNERS	INTENDED AUDIENCE (where applicable)
« THE UNIVERSITY »		
University financing	CFU, local unions, TPU, CREPUQ	MELS, CMEC, Conseil de la Fédération, Finance Canada
Professoriate	Comité sur le corps professoral (CCP), local unions	
University research, policies and structural impacts	Coalition : FPPU, ACPQ, CNCS-FEUQ, local unions	MDEIE, granting agencies, Industry Canada
University organization and administration	Collaborators, local unions, TPU	CREPUQ, university administrations
« LABOUR RELATIONS »		
Industrial relations	Local unions	
Psychological harassment	Collaborators, local unions	
Women in the university	Collaborators, local unions	
Information technology and communication	Collaborators, local unions	
« FQPPU »		
Representation	TPU, PEN-REP, labour organization partners	MELS, MDEIE, CREPUQ, Federal bodies, granting agencies
Communication	Local unions, collaborators	Public media, political bodies, university administrators, granting agencies, labour union partners, local unions, professors
Development of the Fédération	Local unions	
« INTERNATIONAL ISSUES »		
Internationalization and globalization of education	Education International, International Caucus on Higher Education (EI-IE), North America region (higher education and EI affiliates)	
Solidarity with higher education labour organizations	CSFEF, higher education unions in francophone countries, PEN-REP, TPU	Higher education unions in francophone countries
Members' Awareness	Local unions	Professors

ANNEX 2

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Acfas : Association francophone pour le savoir
ACPQ : Association des chercheurs professionnel(le)s du Québec ***
CAUT-ACPPU : Canadian Association of University Teachers **
CCP : Comité sur le corps professoral
CLC-CTC : Canadian Labour Congress **
CMEC : Council of Ministers of Education, Canada
CNCS-FEUQ : Conseil national des cycles supérieurs ***
CPSU/SCFP/FTQ : Conseil supérieur du secteur universitaire **
CREPUQ : Conférence des recteurs et des principaux des universités du Québec
CSE : Conseil supérieur de l'éducation
CSFEF : Comité syndical francophone de l'éducation et de la formation
CSQ : Centrale des syndicats du Québec * et **
CST : Quebec Council for Science and Technology
CTF-FCE : Canadian Teachers Federation **
EI-IE : Education International
FAEUQEP : Fédération des associations étudiantes universitaires québécoises en éducation permanente *
FEUQ : Fédération étudiante universitaire du Québec *
FNEEQ-CSN : Fédération nationale des enseignantes et des enseignants du Québec * et **
FP-CSN : Fédération des professionnelles
FPPU : Fédération du personnel professionnel des universités et de la recherche *
FSQ : Forum social québécois
MDEIE : ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation
MELS : ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport
PEN-REP : Public Education Network
RQIC : Regroupement québécois sur l'initiative continentale
TPU : Table des partenaires universitaires

* Members of TPU

** Members of REP-PEN

*** Members of the coalition « Protéger la recherche publique »