



Canadian Federation of Students
Newfoundland and Labrador
POLICY MANUAL

As Amended February, 2018

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Academic Freedom

Preamble

The intrusion of proprietary interests into the classroom and research environments places pressure on public institutions of higher education to alter their mission in order to secure and/or retain funding from private and government sources.

Insufficient government operating and research grants cause public institutions to become dependent on private sector funds and therefore private sector goals. Matched funding initiatives such as the Canada Foundation for Innovation are direct measures to bind publicly funded projects to the goals of private industry.

Examples of the negative implications of restricted academic freedom include: researchers critical of industry, university, or government practices having positions threatened; courses and research not considered commercially relevant being under-funded or eliminated; and, in general, the democratic voice of dissent becoming increasingly silenced.

For colleges and universities to remain true to their mission to pursue knowledge for its own sake and “to promote, through teaching and research, the principles of freedom and justice, of human dignity and solidarity” (UNESCO international conference, 1950), the tenets of academic freedom must be held as indispensable.

Policy

The Federation supports the right of students, teaching faculty members, and academic researchers in all fora to exercise academic freedom.

The Federation believes Academic Freedom includes, but is not limited to the right of members of the academic community – scholars, teachers, and students – to:

- be openly critical;
- express without fear of reprisal, their views through research, teaching and discussion;
- to do so in accordance with nationally and democratically established ethical and professional standards.

The Federation is opposed to any agreement or contract that infringes upon a student's, teaching faculty members, or academic researcher's academic freedom.

The Federation supports a respectful attitude towards others and the right of all people to express their views and opinions in a safe environment as academic freedom. The Federation opposes academic freedom where it is used to discriminate against others.

The Federation opposes all policies of the federal and provincial governments designed to increase private sector control in any area of post-secondary education.

Adopted
October 2001

Accessibility and Quality

1. Right to Education

It is the policy of the Federation that quality, accessible, and democratically planned post-secondary education is the right of every resident of Canada.

Adopted
March 2001

2. Definition of "Quality in Post-Secondary Education"

A quality education is one that not only transfers information and expertise to a student, but also leaves the student with an ability to think critically, communicate clearly and adapt skills from one field to another. A quality education should enhance the physical, emotional, and ethical, as well as intellectual life of a student. A quality education should contain, but not be limited to the following elements:

- a. faculty/student ration which allows students to receive adequate personal attention in each course;
- b. sufficient access to up-to-date equipment and research facilities;
- c. support services (i.e. recreational, counselling, medical, etc.) such that students are able to live a quality of life based on the Federation's Declaration of Students' Rights;
- d. faculty, teaching assistants, and staff who are fairly and adequately recompensed for their work;
- e. access to democratic processes and the right of appeal as defined in the Federation's Declaration of Students' Rights;
- f. a degree or diploma which is nationally and internationally recognized;
- g. a formal system of providing for student comment on, and critique of, the education they are receiving without restriction on publishing those results;
- h. the encouragement of international perspectives to be fostered by the full participation of visa students, as well as the inclusion of courses with an international perspective where appropriate; and
- i. a suitable, safe, and healthy educational environment.

3. Definition of "Access to Post-Secondary Education"

The Federation defines "access to post-secondary education" as:

- a. no financial, social, cultural, physical or geographical barriers to post-secondary education for all students;
- b. a guaranteed minimum income above the national poverty level;
- c. free quality daycare on all campuses for all students, staff and faculty members;
- d. no differential fees for international students;
- e. complete provision for students with disabilities to have access to all services, buildings, and grounds of the institution;
- f. complete provision for students with disabilities to have access to alternative teaching methods and examinations;
- g. no enrolment quotas;
- h. no course registration procedures that grant higher priority to students with high grade point averages;

- i. the provision of personal career counselling at both the secondary and post-secondary levels directed at groups which are under-represented in the post-secondary system and at groups which predominate a limited number of faculties; and
- j. no impediments to program portability.

4. Support for Adult Basic Education

The Federation supports the provision of Adult Basic Education programs within the community college system. This system is considered to include:

- a. the provision of full support for those individuals who wish to continue their education regardless of which level of primary or secondary education they have completed;
- b. appropriate instruction methods.

5. Support for Accessibility

It is the policy of the Federation that "financial assistance should be made available to all students, the amount to be determined solely on the basis of individual financial need: and should reflect the following objectives:

- a. the removal of direct financial barriers to post-secondary education so as to promote equal opportunity for participation of people from lower socio-economic circumstances and other disadvantaged groups;
- b. the creation of a national program to distribute the funds need to completely cover the costs of obtaining a post-secondary education;
- c. the elimination of discrimination on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, political beliefs, or socio-economic background;
- d. interprovincial mobility; and
- e. the responsibility of the government for improved delivery of student assistance information to secondary school students.

6. Support for Grants from Federal and Provincial Governments

The Federation supports the use of non-repayable grants from provincial and federal governments to assist students in obtaining a post-secondary education.

7. Student Loan Interest Relief

The Federation supports an interest relief program for Newfoundland and Labrador Student Loans and Canada Student Loans, which considers eligible for interest relief, students with insufficient means, including, but not limited to, the unemployed, under-employed, underpaid, and those with child care responsibilities. Further, this program should be available to student loan recipients at any time up to the retirement of their debt.

8. Support for Part-time Student Financial Assistance

- a. The Federation supports loans and grants being available to part-time students on the same basis as they are available to full-time students.
- b. The Federation supports loans to part-time students being re-payable on the same terms as those negotiated for full-time students.

9. Support for Indexation of Student Financial Assistance

The Federation believes that student aid line items should be adjusted annually to reflect the cost associated with the attainment of a post-secondary education.

10. Effects of Housing and Relationship Status on Student Aid Allocation

The Federation opposes the practice of using the living arrangement and/or personal relationships of students as a criterion to determine their financial aid allocation.

11. Privatization of Student Financial Assistance

- a. The Federation believes that privately funded and/or controlled, merit-based and/or needs-based student financial assistance programs should not be considered as alternatives to publicly funded, needs-based student financial assistance programs.
- b. The Federation supports the government guarantee of student loans in contrast to the privatization of the collection, or of any other aspect of the student loans program.

12. Surcharges on Student Financial Assistance

The Federation supports the implementation of student financial assistance programs without sur- charges or other user fees.

13. Support for Proper Allocation of Federal Transfer Payments

The Federation demands all federal transfer payments specified for education be properly allocated for that purpose.

14. Support for the Community College System

- a. The Federation supports the preservation and enhancement of the community college system such that current levels of accessibility and quality of education are improved.
- b. The Federation supports the expansion of trade programs within the current community college system.

15. Support for the Elimination of Tuition Fees

The Federation supports the elimination of tuition and incidental fees.

16. Support for Education on Cultural Issues

The Federation supports education on cultural issues, and, in particular, the development and expansion of education focused on the culture and heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador. Further, such programs should highlight the history and contributions of the aboriginal peoples of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Anti- Harassment

Preamble

The Federation does not tolerate harassment of any form. Harassment is defined as the abusive or demeaning treatment of a person which has the effect of creating a hostile or intimidating environment for that person. Harassment may occur in the following situations:

- i. Through the abuse of power that one person holds over another, or through the misuse of authority;
- ii. Through offending or demeaning a person on the basis of their race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, nationality, religion or religious beliefs, family or marital status, physical or mental ability, age, gender, sexual orientation, whether these be actual or perceived, and;
- iii. Through abusive treatment which leaves a person feeling threatened or intimidated.

Sexual harassment is defined as a display, by word or deed, of sexual attentions towards another person of a nature which may be reasonably considered to be vexatious, abusive, or threatening. Without limiting the generality of that definition, sexual attention shall be deemed to be "vexatious, abusive, or threatening", if the harasser, directly or indirectly, offers the harassee an advantage or opportunity actual or perceived, in return for sexual favours, or directly or indirectly threatens or imposes on the harassee any denial of advantages or opportunity.

Sexual harassment may include unwanted sexual attention or solicitation which has the effect of interfering with an individual's work or psychological environment for work or participation with the Federation. For example: remarks, jokes or innuendoes about a persons' body, attire, age, marital status, gender, sexuality, sexual orientation, perceived sexual orientation or perceived gender identity or orientation.

Although sexual harassment typically involves a person in a superior position as the initiator, it is recognized that people in subordinate or equal position may also be initiators. Although sexual harassment is disproportionately directed towards women, people of any gender can be harassed by members of any sex.

Policy

The Federation shall employ the following procedure for dealing with incidents of harassment which may occur at any Federation event. Throughout this process, the principles of confidentiality and due process shall be strictly adhered to:

1. Advisor

The Federation shall retain, for the duration of all general meetings, the services of an Anti-Harassment Advisor who will be available 24 hours. The advisor will carry a communication device, the number of which will be prominently displayed on all general meeting materials.

The Advisor shall be experienced in respecting intersectional identities, dealing with incidents of harassment and sexual harassment, shall possess training in peer support, advocacy and active listening, and a minimum of one (1) year of demonstrable practical experience

2. Orientation

Time will be allocated for a full discussion on anti-harassment procedures during the opening plenary at every provincial general meeting.

3. Complaints

Any participant at a Federation event who believes that she or he has been subjected to harassment is encouraged to utilize the Federation's process for dealing with incidents of harassment. If the person feels that they would like to make a direct request of the harasser in an attempt to prevent further incidents of objectionable behavior, then they are encouraged to do so. Should the complainant wish to have the incident dealt with through the available process, then they should approach the Anti-Harassment Advisor, who shall hear the complaint and counsel the complainant.

The Anti-Harassment Advisor may, with the consent of the complainant, attempt to find an amicable resolution to the incident with the alleged harasser, and by acting as a go-between the two parties.

The complainant may, at any time, launch a formal complaint. The Anti-Harassment Advisor may assist in the formulation of the complaint, and shall remain available to advise the complainant throughout the process.

4. The Harassment and Grievance Committee

For each formal complaint brought forward, a committee shall be struck comprised of the Anti-Harassment Advisor, one of the Executive members of the Provincial Board of Directors, and one delegate from the meeting at which the alleged harassment took place. Both the delegate and the Provincial Executive member chosen must be satisfactory to both the complainant and the respondent. Committee members, except the Anti-Harassment Advisor, cannot previously have been involved with the case complainant and the case respondent, in any way.

The Anti-Harassment Advisor on the committee shall advise both the complainant and the respondent of the nature of the allegation, the process to be followed, and their rights within that process.

The committee shall be empowered to undertake a confidential and independent investigation of the complaint. The committee may call witnesses who may prove useful in determining the nature of the incident. At all times, the committee shall be cognizant of and respect the right of each party to know and respond to all allegations.

The complainant shall reserve the right to discontinue proceedings at any time. All proceedings and records of the committee shall remain strictly confidential.

5. Remedies

Should the Grievance Committee determine that the incident(s) did constitute harassment, it may provide for a remedy. Any remedy currently takes into account such factors as the severity and frequency of harassment, whether the harassment was deliberate or inadvertent, and any circumstances that either aggravated or mitigated the situation, with an emphasis on empowerment, well-being and full consent of the complainant on the course of action to be taken'

Remedies may include, but shall not be limited to, the following: an apology from the harasser to the harassee, recommendations for outside counseling for the harasser, and prevention of contact between the parties, which may be brought about by banning the harasser from all selected Federation activities.

A simple majority shall determine the Grievance Committee decision. Reprisals constitute further harassment. An appeal must be made in writing, stating the grounds of the appeal, to the Anti-Harassment Advisor or to one of the Executive members of the Provincial Board of Directors.

6. Appeals

An appeal may be launched within thirty (30) days of the Grievance Committee's decision if either party wishes to question the findings, remedies or process of the committee. An appeal must be made in writing, stating the alleged breach(es), to the Anti-Harassment Advisor, or one of the Executive members of the Provincial Board of Directors.

The Appeals Committee shall consist of the Anti-Harassment Advisor, one representative chosen by the appellant, and one representative appointed by the Grievance Committee, both of whom must have been a participant in the meeting at which the alleged harassment took place, as a delegate, Provincial Executive member or as a staff member. No member of the Appeals Committee shall have any previous involvement with the case. The Appeals Committee shall hear submissions from both the respondent and the appellant regarding the legitimacy of the process followed, the suitability of the remedy, or the finding(s) in question, and shall render their decision on a majority vote.

7. Records

Records of all cases shall be confidentially maintained by the Provincial Chairperson, and only active members shall have access to these files, on a need-to-know basis, based on the relevancy of the file to the case they are currently working on. The Anti-Harassment Advisor will submit, within six (6) weeks after the adjournment of each provincial general meeting, a non-identifying report which will include the number of complaints, nature of complaints, number of cases resolved and number of cases not resolved.

All references that may be utilized to identify individuals involved in the case will be destroyed after two (2) years have passed.

The complainant may, at any time, launch a formal complaint. The Anti-Harassment Advisor may assist in the formulation of the complaint, and shall remain available to advise the complainant throughout the process.

Collection Agencies

The Federation opposes collection agencies that use intimidation tactics and/or do not adhere to the guidelines dealing with such agencies established by the provincial government or relevant government institution.

The Federation supports the establishment of an institution by the provincial government to protect and inform students of their rights when dealing with collection agencies.

Adopted
March 2002

Counselling Services

Post-secondary students often confront stressful and traumatic situations including; but not limited to, transition to post-secondary education, academic workload, financial strain, familial and per conflicts and violence. The situation is particularly acute with respect to women and members of minority groups, as they are regularly subjected to systemic discrimination. Consequently, students' academic lives may be negatively affected. To assist them in coping, the Federation supports the establishment of free, accessible, high quality psychological counselling services on every campus in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Adopted
March 2000

Commercialization

The Federation supports publicly funded and administered education. The Federation is therefore opposed to any and all forms of commercialized education.

The Federation opposed the commercialization of university and college campuses. This includes but is not limited to:

1. The selling of space on university and college campuses for corporate advertising;
2. Advertising within educational materials; and
3. Donor recognition when it is used as a form of advertising.

Adopted
March 2001

Course Evaluations

Preamble

Adopted
February 2010

Since the 1960's, students have been seeking to achieve a stronger voice in the governance of universities. Teaching surveys were promoted as a way of ensuring that the student perspective would be taken into account in evaluating their instructors. Currently, student concerns about accountability have increased demand for anonymous teaching evaluations.

Anonymous student ratings of teaching (be it the course or the instructor) are widely used in post-secondary institutions to evaluate teaching. Many different questionnaires are employed, and procedures governing their use are highly variable. Generally two important but distinct functions are served: formative and summative. Formative feedback provides direction to instructors to help them to improve their instruction. Summative feedback is information for the evaluative purpose of personnel decisions and students' course selection. Then it must be noted that a balance must be struck between the formative and summative information which is related by the student to their instructor through the evaluation. As well, such a balance must be carried forward towards any data which is made more widely available to the student populace.

One must note however that results of instructor/course evaluations can be based around a summary of students' attitudes or opinion towards the course and its instructor, creating a very blunt instrument for measuring teaching effectiveness. Thus, any evaluation must contain information toward what has actually been learned along with the opinions toward the method of delivery of said information by the course instructor. This again acts to maintain a balance between improvement of instruction and the provision of information for future students.

The complexities in the teaching-learning environment should demand additional caution to be exercised in the interpretation of teaching evaluation results. For example, an evaluation based on a market-based relationship that emphasises student satisfaction clearly characterises students only as "consumers" of a teaching "product". Such limitations only dampen experimental teaching styles that challenge or provoke students. Ultimately this framework will create subtle pressure on faculty to grade leniently, thereby subverting the educational experience in favour of the lowest common denominator.

Equally, where situations are largely in the inverse of this ideal – those that unnecessarily allow for harshness or laxity in instruction to go unnoticed or improperly recorded – must be of note, as mechanisms could be simply in place to allow for nominal response from students. As such evaluations cannot be assured to act as the definite and all-encompassing view of a particular course or its instruction, but instead should be regarded as a tool which can aid in this regard.

There is also evidence that women and minority faculty members may be evaluated by students in ways that their colleagues are not. This can be especially problematic in situations where these faculty members, by virtue of their minority status, do not conform to traditionalist students' expectations for their instructors.

Further, there is evidence that student evaluations which claim to be anonymous may have flaws in their inherent structure which could allow for the ostracizing of the recognized students within their program of study. For example, handwritten evaluation responses are, in some systems, given to the course instructor. While the student's name or recognizable identification may not be present, discerning the individual is indeed possible.

The Federation recognises the somewhat limited utility of anonymous instructor evaluations to measure teaching effectiveness, where evaluations are employed for summative purposes. Any procedure for the evaluation of teaching should attempt take into account all relevant sources of information regarding teaching.

Policy

The Federation supports:

- the use of fully anonymous instructor and course evaluations; and
- the right of faculty and teaching assistant unions to negotiate guidelines for the use of instructor evaluations in collective agreements; and
- the need for student input on the formulation of guidelines and policy regarding instructor or course evaluation procedures; and
- the right of students to the data which has been collected via these processes, in accordance with the above notions; and
- the right of staff and faculty to conceal data which exacts unjust harm and are defamatory to their person in accordance with the above notions. This does not include statements or data which solely reflect poorly on the implementation and execution of course material.

Distance Education

The Federation supports the use of distance learning when it encourages critical thinking, accessibility, empowerment of students, and is provided in the best interest of students. The Federation strongly opposes distance learning as a substitute for one-on-one contact with faculty and when used as a solution to the under-funding of education.

Adopted
October 2001

Federal Funding

Preamble

On April 1, 1996, the federal government implemented the Canada Health and Social Transfer (CHST), which combined the federal transfer payments for post-secondary education and health (Established Program Financing) and transfers for social assistance and social services (Canada Assistance Plan). Not only was the change accompanied by deep funding cuts, but also the very nature of federal responsibility for higher education was shifted.

Without minimum funding amounts designated for post-secondary education, provincial governments have used disproportionate sums of the CHST to increase health care spending at the expense of education spending. Virtually none of the recent increases in transfer payments have been spent on post-secondary education, and the federal government has no recourse with provincial governments. Without accountability for federal spending, there can be no guarantee of national standards for accessibility, quality, comprehensiveness, transferability, and mobility.

Policy

The Federation supports transfer payments that contain a specific and adequate portion for post-secondary education.

The Federation opposes block transfer payments that contain no minimum allotment for post-secondary education, such as the Canada Health and Social Transfer.

The Federation supports transfer payments for post-secondary education that are calculated on a per student basis, rather than by a province's general population, and that are based on average student need in each province and territory.

The Federation supports the establishment of a federal Post-Secondary Education Act to regulate minimum transfers to the provinces for post-secondary education.

Adopted
October 2000
Amended
October 2003

Governance of Post-Secondary Institutions

The Federation strongly supports increasing public accountability of governing boards of post-secondary institutions. As such, the Federation supports a process of selections of Board members that is both open and transparent and that these selections include adequate student representation. Further, the Federation supports the right of representatives of students' associations to participate in the decision-making process within post-secondary institutions at all levels. As colleges and universities exist to serve students, the Federation supports increasing voting representation of students in governance to not less than fifty percent (50%).

The Federation is opposed to governance of post-secondary institutions being conducted in secret without public scrutiny. The Federation openly and publicly supports Boards of Governors meeting, particularly when financial decisions regarding student fees are being made.

Adopted
October 2001

Government Committee Representation

The Federation supports government policy-making initiatives that include consultation with the public, especially those groups most affected by said initiatives. In particular, the Federation supports the creation of government committees that include adequate and democratic student representation. As the province's democratic student organization, the Federation calls for the selection of youth and student representatives on government committees to be chosen by the Federation.

The Federation opposes the creation of governmental committees that deal with issues pertinent to youth and post-secondary students but which do not include representation of the Canadian Federation of Students. In particular, the Federation supports the right of students to be represented by the Federation on any relevant committee that is organized within the scope of the Department of Youth Services and Post-Secondary Education.

Adopted
October 2001

Income Contingent Repayment Schemes

Preamble

First introduced in 1955 by U.S. economist Milton Friedman, a leading proponent of supply side economics, Income Contingent Repayment Schemes (ICRs, also referred to as “Income Sensitive”) were devised as a way to shift the cost of an education from the state to the individual. This shift would result in increasing the cost of education and student debt loads. Friedman proposed that, in order to bear the increased financial load, students should have access to loans so large that they would only be manageable if the repayment was scaled to the level of students’ income after graduation.

Supports of ICRs characterize the plan as a fair and flexible model of student aid. But, ICR models are mechanisms to raise institutional revenue through an emphasis on debt management, rather than acknowledging the crisis of debt accumulation. Shifting the cost to students would only place upward pressure on user fees, further increasing debt loads. In other countries where ICRs have been implemented, such as Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom, the corresponding tuition fee increases have been dramatic, some as high as 500% in one year.

Borrowers with lower incomes after graduation repay their loans over a longer period of time, thus accruing more interest than graduates with high post-graduate incomes who are able to repay their loans more quickly. The result is borrowers who earn more money would pay less for their education. Ultimately, the Schemes would discriminate against disadvantaged groups in Canada, who continue to suffer from wage inequity. Consequently, it is likely that many people will select their field of study based on a rough estimate of future earnings, rather than personal interest.

Historically, when ICRs have been considered in Canada, the reaction has been overwhelming. When the federal Liberal government attempted to introduce the Schemes in 1995, the Federation mounted a massive campaign and successfully defeated their implementation. In 1996, the provincial government in Ontario also proposed ICRs but met resistance from students, and unwillingness from the banks.

Policy

The Federation opposes Income Contingent Repayment Schemes and related repayment schemes that extend debt repayment, rather than reduce student debt.

The Federation supports a system of national and provincial grants.

Adopted
October 2003

Interest Rates

Preamble

Beginning in 1994, tuition fees in Newfoundland and Labrador increased at a rate four times higher than inflation and the provincial system of need-based grants was discontinued and replaced with a full system of loans. Since 1999, tuition fees have been frozen and reduced, and in 2007, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador reinstated a partial system of upfront need-based grants.

Despite these progressive measures, many graduates are still struggling to pay off their student debt. Students and families from low- and middle-income backgrounds have to borrow the most in order to pursue post-secondary studies. Graduating with higher debt loads, these students pay more in interest payments throughout the life of their loans.

Interest payments prolong repayment of student debt as less money is placed on the principal, impeding graduates' ability to contribute to the economy for many years after the end of their studies. Presenting an additional barrier beyond tuition fees already charged for post-secondary education undermines the positive effect of student financial assistance on low and middle-income enrolment.

Interest rates ultimately penalise already marginalised groups. It is well documented that women, visible minorities and aboriginal people earn less on average than white men, a reality that persists at all education levels. Thus amongst student loan borrowers, those who experience inequity in the labour force will take longer to pay off their student loan and incur greater interest.

Policy

The Federation supports the elimination of interest rates on student loans.

Adopted
January 2009

Portability

The Federation supports the integrity and transferability of course credits between all public post-secondary educational institutions. The Federation further supports the increase of educational cooperation between Memorial University of Newfoundland, Sir Wilfred Grenfell College, Marine Institute and College of the North Atlantic through the Articulation, Transfer and Admissions Committee (ATAC).

Adopted
October 2000

Racism

The Federation believes in equality between all people regardless of where their ancestors came from, what colour their skin is, their cultural traditions, their religious affiliation or where they were born. The Federation believes in social equality regardless of ethnicity, general or sexual orientation. The Federation supports and economy and community where everybody cooperates to enable everyone to live healthy, prosperous, and pleasant lives.

The Federation is committed to working toward anti-racist principles. These include mutual respect between all people, the inclusion of diverse perspectives in decision-making and active efforts to further equality between all people.

The Federation supports anti-racist principles at work on campus, including the creation of Anti-Racism or Human Rights Centers on campus, fully publicly funded to serve the needs of all students. Such centers should be administered by students, including aboriginal students, women students, and students who are members of minority groups.

Adopted
March 2001
Amended
October 2001

Safety on Campus

The Federation supports the implementation of safety measures including, but not limited to, safety workshops, external lighting, and walk-home programs on all college and university campuses.

Adopted
March 2001

Sexual Harassment

1. The Federation adheres to the following sexual harassment policy:
 - a. The Federation will not tolerate sexual harassment or harassment of any form;
 - b. Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted sexual attention, sexual solicitation or other sexually oriented remarks or behaviour; sexual harassment may be psychological or physical in nature. One incident, or the aggregation of a series of incidents, may constitute sexual harassment.
2. Sexual Harassment may include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Unwanted sexual attention or solicitation which has the effect of interfering with an individual's work or participation, or which creates a negative emotional or psychological environment for work or participation within the Federation. For example, remarks, jokes or innuendoes about a person's body, attire, age, marital status, gender, sexuality, sexual orientation, perceived sexual orientation or perceived gender orientation;
 - b. An implied or expressed threat of reprisal for refusal to comply with a sexually oriented request;
 - c. An implied or expressed promise of reward for complying with a sexually oriented request.

Adopted
March 2001

Solidarity and Coalition Work

'Solidarity and Coalition Work

In order to achieve its goals, the Federation recognizes the importance of solidarity and works in coalition with other groups and organizations which share the Federation's objectives and vision for collective action, equity, and progressive change.

The Federation shall refuse to work in coalition with groups and organizations when work in such a coalition results in the production of materials that contradict the goals and objectives of the Federation or may serve to legitimize organizations whose goals and objectives are contradictory with those of the Federation.

The Federation encourages students to work with members of the post-secondary educational community, and in doing so supports initiatives which unite students and workers and opposes penalties imposed upon unions at post-secondary institutions for respecting picket lines.

Publication

The Federation shall publicly maintain a list of all coalitions in which it is a participant and include this list on the Provincial section of the National website.'

Limitation

The Federation's Solidarity and Coalition Work policy should in no way interfere with its ultimate goal to support students in achieving a system of post-secondary education which is accessible to all, which is of high quality, which is nationally planned, which recognizes the legitimacy of student representation, and validity of student rights, and whose role in society is clearly recognized and appreciated.'

Adopted
March 2001

Amended
February 2018

Student Employment

The Federation supports the development of student employment programs that provide challenging, career-related training for students in a diversity of fields. These programs should fairly and adequately recompense students for their work.

The Federation is opposed to student employment programs that recompense students with tuition vouchers and wages that are below the national poverty line.

Students should have equal opportunity to have access to an adequate number of programs regardless of age.

Adopted
March 2001

Student Financial Assistance

1. General Policy

The Federation supports:

- a. student financial assistance program being universally and equitably accessible to full-time and part-time students;
- b. student financial assistance programs that are adequate to the needs of all students, including provision for the extra expenses incurred by students with dependents, students who must live away from their home communities to attend post-secondary institutions, and by students with disabilities and/or special needs; and
- c. the public provision of accessible and thorough information on all aspects of student financial assistance programs.

2. Student Grants

The Federation believes that student aid should be provided through a full and adequate system of grants. Students should not be penalized based on personal relationships or living arrangements, nor should there be unreasonable or inflexible restrictions on academic performance or duration of study. The Federation opposes inadequate substitutes for such a system, including but not limited to:

- a. privately-funded savings plans for post-secondary education, such as Registered Education Savings Plans; and
- b. merit-based scholarship programs.

3. Student Loans

Preamble

Insofar as the federal and provincial governments have chosen to provide student financial assistance in the form of loans and insufficient grants, the Federation supports the following policies on student loans.

Policy

The Federation believes that any student loan program should be:

- a. publicly administered; and
- b. publicly financed and guaranteed.

The Federation supports:

- a. an interest relief program for those with insufficient financial means, that is available at any time up to the retirement of their debt;
- b. a debt remission program for student loans that is based on the total amount of debt incurred federally and provincially;
- c. a debt remission program for student loans that does not include any penalties based on academic performances or time restrictions;
- d. designation of all publicly-funded institutions as eligible to participate in student loan program, regardless of factors such as loan default rate of graduates; and
- e. zero interest on student loans.

Adopted
October 2003

POLICY

The Federation opposes:

- a. any generation of profits from the administration of student loan programs;
- b. administrative fees on student loans;
- c. any measures that penalize student debt holders, due to disruption of classes resulting from labour disputes;
- d. the imposition of measures that serve to restrict access to, or eligibility for, student loan programs, on any basis other than need; and
- e. publicly funded student loans being made available to students at private institutions.

Students' Right to Protest

The Federation recognizes that peaceful protests are an integral and important strategy for building public support of students' issues while challenging institutional and societal imbalances and abuses of power. Further to this, the Federation opposes any impediments to the right to conduct peaceful protests, including, but not limited to, police intimidation.

Adopted
October 2000

Trade Agreements

Preamble

Initiatives such as the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (effective January 1, 1989), the North American Free Trade Agreement between Canada, the U.S., and Mexico (effective January 1, 1994), the Free Trade Area of the Americas (December 1994), Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (begun in 1989), and the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (defeated in 1998), imperil Canada's public education sector. The Canadian Government has put Canada's education sector on the agenda of the World Trade Organization under the auspices of GATS – the General Agreement on Trade in Services. Under the GATS agreement, countries must grant "national" treatment" rights to foreign corporations, including the right to "set up a commercial presence in the export market". If education is included in the GATS agreement, the prior rights of transnational education corporations will be established in the World Trade Organization.

This will result in such consequences as:

- the privatization of post-secondary education and other social programs;
- reduction of the role of governments and public services;
- unsustainable economic growth;
- human rights abuses;
- oppression through the deregulation of job standards;
- the loss of jobs in Canada;
- environmental degradation and exploitation of resources;
- privatization of public resources; and
- erosion of culture and cultural industries.

Policy

The Federation calls for:

1. The immediate abrogation of the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement and of the North American Free Trade Agreement;
2. Canada's withdrawal from Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation and from any future negotiations of the Multilateral Agreement on Investment;
3. Canada's withdrawal from the Organization of American States and from any future negotiations of the Free Trade Area of the Americas;
4. Reduction of the power of the World Trade Organization and a review of the World Trade Organization's impact on development, democracy, environmental rights, education, health, human rights, labour rights, and cultural industries;
5. Cessation of the services negotiations in the World Trade Organization under their current mandate; and
6. The exclusion from any world trade agreements of areas of life that should not be traded on the open market, including but not limited to culture, heritage, the arts, education and health.

Water

Water is a public trust; it belongs to everyone. No one should have the right to appropriate it or profit from it at someone else's expense. The Federation seeks a full ban on the bulk export of water to prevent the gradual commodification and privatization of this priceless, public resource.

Adopted
March 2001
 Amended
October 2001

POLICY

The Federation strongly opposes the proposed use of potential profits from the bulk sale of fresh water as a solution to the under-funding of post-secondary education.

Work Terms

The Federation encourages post-secondary institutes to adopt uniform and equally accessible work term programs, in order to ensure students are not discriminated against their chosen program of study.

Adopted
October 2002