

October 2024—Volume 16, Issue 3

CUSSU Concordia University Support Staff Newsletter



CUSSU SESUC

Note from the President:

Dear Members;

I would like to inform you that due to some glitches in SAP, there has been some issues with some of our member's retro salary increase pay. There were two issues: one if you applied some of your retro towards a RRSP, the taxes were charged on the whole gross salary and not the actual amount; the second issue is we noticed that the Employers portion of the pension deduction was less than the employee, which should be the opposite. I have written to the University Administration for explanation as to what went wrong and how they will fix the problem. I've also asked that the university send our CUSSU members a communication about the issues encountered and elaborate on the remedy to these issues.

In other news, we are still waiting to meet with the university to go over our new Collective agreement. We will keep you posted.

In solidarity,
Donna Fasciano
CUSSU, President

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Contributors to this issue

- Donna Fasciano
- Larissa Dutil
- Donna Whittaker
- Bo-Kyung Kim
- Christabell Moyo



Photo credit:
Penh Srey

Photos from the May 2024 SGM where CUSSU members voted in favor of the new collective agreement.





CUSSU members have a few options: **Early Retirement** (55 years old and up); 65 years old (**normal retirement date**) or you may also choose to **continue working** after the age of 65 years old and retire at a later age or latest 71 years old.

Early Retirement – Article 37.04

An employee aged fifty-five (55) or more is eligible to take early retirement as of the first of the month, which coincides with or follows her/his birthday, subject to a notice of at least three (3) months to her/his immediate supervisor and the Human resource department

Early retirement with Allowance – Article 37.05

In addition to her/his early retirement pension, a permanent employee who has completed fifteen (15) years of service and who is at least fifty-five (55) years old, is eligible to receive a lump sum, calculated as a percentage of her/his annual base salary in effect on the day preceding her/his date of retirement. The amounts are determined as follows:

AGE AT THE TIME OF RETIREMENT	PERCENTAGE OF ANNUAL BASE SALARY
55 to 60 inclusive	100%
61	80%
62	60%
63	40%
64	20%

Summary of the Article:

1. Five (5) employees may benefit from the provisions of this article per collective agreement year, which extends from June 1st to May 31st. However, if they have not been used they are added for future year, not acceding 10 per year. *This year 2025/2026 there are 8 employees that will benefit.
2. Request for early retirement with allowance must be received by the Pension and Benefits unit of the HR unit between June 1st and November 30th. *For this year 2024; you are applying for retirement 2025-2026.
3. To submit your request, a permanent employee must be at least fifty-five (55) years old of age and have completed a minimum of fifteen (15) years of service. However, a request by a permanent employee who is at least fifty-four (54) years old and who has completed at least fourteen (14) years of service will be considered if she/he meets all of the eligibility criteria at the intended early retirement date.
4. If your request is refused or you withdraw, you will have to re-apply the following year.
5. Requests are granted to the candidate with the most seniority. If two candidates have the same seniority date, the older employee between the two is given priority.

Continuation—Thinking of Retiring? Article 37.05

6. An employee who has submitted a request will be notified in writing of the acceptance or refusal of their request by December 15th at the latest. A copy will also be sent to the union. If your request was accepted, you must confirm your retirement date by the following February 1st at the latest.
7. If you withdraw your request or do not confirm your retirement date within the delays, the early retirement with allowance is offered to the next candidate in order of seniority.
8. If you have confirmed your retirement date you must retire on that date. However, if an unforeseen event arises between the date of confirmation of the retirement date and the actual retirement date (refer to the complete Article for the exceptions).
 - You can request to split the amounts immediately following retirement or in January of the year following my retirement.
 - You can also choose to put some in RRSP if you have the contribution room.

Normal Retirement – Article 37.03

An employee is eligible for her/his full University pension as of the first of the month, which coincides with or follows her/his sixty-fifth (65th) birthday.

Contact a Pension Assistant/Advisor

- Once you have decided to retire what comes next. You can use the pension projection tool to figure out your pensionable income at Pension@ccess or visit the website [Concordia University—Your Pension Plan Web Site \(hroffice.com\)](http://Concordia University—Your Pension Plan Web Site (hroffice.com)).
- You can also book an appointment to discuss your pension plan with one of our Pension Assistant at HR.
- A to J – Nelson Sauveur and K-Z Olivier LeBlanc. You may also want to contact Madalena Vidal the Senior Pension Advisor.

Things to Keep in Mind once you retire:

Benefits:

- You will lose access to Health Services
- No more dental Plan
- No more access to the Concordia email address
- No more access to Carrefour
- No more access to Optional Life Insurance

For more information visit the website on Carrefour Retirement benefits - Concordia University

At 65 years old you also have to apply for RAMQ for medical and the portion not paid by RAMQ can be claimed by your medical insurance. You have the option to opt out of the medical insurance plan.

Vacation entitlement:

You may choose to take your vacation entitlement that you have left in your UNITY bank before your retirement date. Remember if you would retire for example on September 1st; you would have accumulated from June 1 to Aug 31st vacation entitlement % of your gross salary (% depends on the years of service at Concordia, more than 21 years will get 10%)

Your vacation entitlement if not all taken will be paid out.

Continuation—Thinking of Retiring?

Don't forget before you plan your vacations before retirement or payout; did you pay back the Transition pay (2 weeks)?

Transition pay (2 weeks) If you did not give back the 2 weeks; university will remove those 2 weeks before paying out any vacation entitlement. If you forgot if you gave back the transition pay, check on your paystub. See example below; if you see this on your paystub that means you did not pay back. If you don't see this means you have paid back the 2 weeks of the transition pay.

EARNINGS AND OTHER PAYMENTS							
	CURRENT			PRIOR PAY ADJUSTMENTS			
	Hours	Rate	Amount	Hours	Rate	Amount	
Trans.Pay FTPens balance							
Total							

Photos from

CUSSU's Summer BBQ

held on the first Summer Friday in June, 2024 at Weinstein and Gavino's on Crescent Street.

All photos credit Penh Srey



Our host and Quiz master, Jennifer Srey in action! Door prizes, musical games, Concordia-specific trivia—so many prizes were given away, as well as CUSSU swag, such as messenger bags and pins.

Many thanks to Jennifer and the entire Summer BBQ organizing committee!





October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month - here is a retelling of her cancer journey by **Donna Whittaker**

My journey through breast cancer began with a routine mammogram at the end of August 2012. I had been having the tests biannually since 1999 and always at the same place, the Breast Centre at the old Royal Victoria Hospital (MUHC).

This test in 2012 started out no different than any other I had had: arrived, registered, got changed, and waited to be called into the test room. All went well and I just had to wait for the team to release me after the test had been reviewed by the technician and a doctor. Only they kept me waiting, and waiting, and waiting... I watched others go in and out and then get told they could go and yet I was still sitting there. A horrible feeling began to spread through me as I watched others leaving. And then I got called into the office and was told that they thought that they could see "something." "Could we do an ultrasound?" "Sure." Back into an examining room and I was surrounded by technicians, doctors, and nurses all watching the screen. "Could we take a biopsy?" "Sure, I'm here now." And, with those words, I knew they had found cancer though they would not say those words at that point because they wanted to wait for the biopsy results. But I knew and I think they did too.

Ten days later (test results take time!), I got an urgent call to go see my family doctor who had sent the mammogram requisition in. She had the responsibility of telling me that it was indeed cancer but that my tumour was very small. She also called the hospital to try to get me an appointment with someone in the cancer centre to find out what the next steps were. But the Centre was already on it and I would hear from them early the following week with a series of appointments starting with my assigned surgeon. I saw him at the end of September and at that point the tumour had grown enough that he could easily feel. My surgery was scheduled for October 15 and in those 2 weeks, I was in and out of the hospital for tests and meetings all in preparation for my surgery. All the while, I could feel the tumour growing – yes, I could actually feel it! In fact, on the day of my operation, I told my surgeon that if he didn't remove it now, it would pop out all on its own. Even he was shocked at how easily he could feel it and the size it seemed to have grown in a few short weeks. But it was removed along with margin tissue and 2 lymph nodes for testing to see if the tumour had spread.

I was lucky in so far that it didn't spread; in fact, it seemed that it devoted itself to growing itself! I thought I had dodged the bullet and that was that. But it wasn't. The type of tumour, HER II Positive, is quite aggressive and the cancer team determined that I needed to undergo 6 months of chemotherapy and 6 weeks of radiation therapy and 1 year of a medicine called Herceptin, specifically for the type of cancer I had.

The chemo I had makes you lose your hair: the hair everywhere, not just on the top of your head but your eyebrows, eye lashes, hair on your arms, legs, torso! It is very scary to watch the nurses get into full PPE to protect themselves from the very stuff they are about to inject into your veins. And, trust me, your veins protest all the poking and prodding and by my third round of chemo, I had to have a catheter inserted into my chest so that the chemo could continue. But I finished my treatment by June 2013 and then started my radiation therapy and was finished that by August 2013. The hair started to grow back, and while I was still going to see the doctors every month (then 3 months, 6 months, and finally once a year), life was returning to normal. I was able to travel, return to work, and generally pick up where I left off.

I am now considered "cured" as I have gone over 10 years without a reoccurrence of cancer. I have my yearly mammogram, see my surgeon once a year (for the mammogram results) and my cancer doctor for my yearly blood test where they check for tumour markers. All are clear and my cancer doctor tells me he continues to see me because I'm "boring!"

That's okay...I'll take being called boring if it means I have cleared the tests for another year!

CUSSU in the Kitchen

... 'cause everyone wants a revolution, but no one wants to do the dishes!

Peaches & Cream Sensation

(submitted by Bo-Kyung Kim)



INGREDIENTS:

FOR THE CRUST

3 cups (280 g) graham cracker crumbs

2-3 tablespoons granulated sugar

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup (170 g) butter, melted

FOR THE CREAMY FILLING

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups (171 g) powdered sugar

8 ounces (227 g) cream cheese, softened to room temperature

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon vanilla extract

2 cups cold heavy (40%) whipping cream (see note)

5-6 medium fresh peaches, peeled, pitted and sliced thinly (see note)

INSTRUCTIONS - This is a no-bake recipe, hurrah!

To make the crust: In a medium bowl, stir together the graham cracker crumbs and granulated sugar. Stir in the melted butter until the crumbs are evenly moistened. Remove $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of the crumbs and set aside for later. Press the remaining crumb mixture on the bottom of a 9x13-inch pan. Refrigerate the crust while preparing the rest of the dessert.

To make the creamy filling: In a large bowl using an electric handheld mixer or in the bowl of an electric stand mixer, mix the powdered sugar and cream cheese together until light and smooth, 1-2 minutes. Mix in the vanilla.

Pour in the cold heavy cream and mix on low (to avoid spatters) until the mixture starts to come together. Increase the speed to medium-high and mix until the mixture is thick and fluffy. Spread a little less than half of the cream filling over the chilled crust. Layer the sliced peaches over the top of the cream. Dollop the remaining cream over the top of the peaches in large spoonfuls and spread carefully to the edges of the pan cover the peaches completely. Sprinkle the reserved graham cracker mixture over the top. Cover with plastic wrap and chill for at least 2 hours or up to 12 hours before serving.

Notes:

Sweetness: if the peaches you are using are very ripe/very sweet, you may want to decrease the powdered sugar a bit in the filling.

Peaches: For frozen peaches, thaw and drain excess liquid. For canned peaches, drain and lightly pat dry.

Heavy Cream: Using a high fat whipping cream is important because we aren't whipping it separately. You might want to whip it to soft peaks before gradually mixing it in with the cream cheese mixture (otherwise, it may not thicken).

HOW TO REACH US

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Executive Committee Members

Donna Fasciano - President

Jennifer Muir - VP General

David Babcock - VP Grievance

Bo-Kyung Kim - Secretary

Vidya Khan - Treasurer

Faith Howard - VP Health & Safety

Larissa Dutil - VP Information

Christabell Moyo - VP Women's Issues

Calendar

November 5, 2024: Movember Coffee Break

Please join us for a CUSSU coffee break as we support the Movember Movement on Tuesday, November 5, 2024, from 9:30 am to 11:30 am.

Loyola Campus: RF 110

SGW Campus: MB2.130

Movember is an annual event that focuses on men's health issues. It is observed during the month of November to raise awareness and funds for men's health – specifically prostate cancer, testicular cancer, mental health, and suicide prevention.

Please come in numbers to support our brothers, sons, husbands, fathers, partners, nephews, and grandfathers.

[Please RSVP by October 28, 2024](#)

Have suggestions or Ideas for the newsletter?



News From Members

The CUSSU newsletter is packed with practical advice on various issues of interest to the support staff. We want to give you the opportunity to stay in touch with us, and to tell us what useful information you would like to see on the CUSSU website and CUSSU newsletter. **Newsletters are usually published four times per year**, and is sent to all members as a benefit of our membership.

If you have a problem and would like your fellow members to help, send your questions, suggestions or comments to cussu@concordia.ca. This email address is protected from spambots.

The Executive seeks to support and assist you, our members, by keeping you informed of any new developments in the University. **Your union delegates:**

Email us at cussu@concordia.ca

CUSSU Website: Please check out our CUSSU website at

www.CUSSU.net

Did you know CUSSU has a [Facebook Page?](#)



EV Building contacts Gabiella Pedicelli ext. 4566	LB Building contacts Stuart O'Driscoll ext. 3483 Helene Medeiros ext. 2435 Aneil Mehta ext. 2653	MB Building contact Christabell Moyo ext. 2982 Larissa Dutil ext. 4750
FG Building contact Sheri Bernier ext. 2029	GM Building contact Michel Erkie ext. 4906 Donna Fasciano ext. 2530	Loyola Campus contacts Vidya Khan ext. 3702 Karen Holder ext. 2223 Jennifer Muir ext. 2080 Daniel Amico ext. 4239 Amanda Rosen ext. 2222
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