

NEWSLETTER JUNE 2020

As academics at UWA, we find ourselves at a turning point. For a long time, we have been putting our shoulders to the wheel to do whatever needed to be done. When we have been asked to come up with new degrees, new programs, new intellectual structures, new ways of interacting with our students, etc. etc. etc. — we have done so. In many cases, we have sounded clear warnings about likely outcomes that were often ignored; and the lack of consultation left many of us feeling angry, exhausted or sad.

And now, with the University on the cusp of financial disaster, we are asked to provide much of the support necessary to buy time to once again respond to critical conditions. This is painful. But, it has also reinvigorated a nascent sense of community on this campus.

The UWAASA committee is unanimous in our absolute appreciation for what academics, and professional staff, have contributed to this institution over the decades. We are unanimous in our belief that academics deserve more consultation and greater consideration of our concerns—not just for ourselves but for the quality and the continued health of our University. We hope that this juncture permanently shifts the nature of interactions between the academic staff, the executive, and the Senate.

We, as academics, have the insight, the intelligence, the experience and the expertise to contribute substantially to more successful decision-making. Perhaps the current conditions, which are the result not only of COVID-19 but of years of decision-making largely dismissive of the rank and file, will convince the managing and oversight bodies to better use the talents of academic staff.

In the current moment, we urge our members to exercise their right to vote on the current ballot.