

**You Can't Fix What You Don't See:
A Case Study of Unprofessional Behaviour in the Workplace**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the project is to conduct an audit of unprofessional behaviour experienced by University of Northern British Columbia Faculty Association members (professors, librarians, senior laboratory instructors and term instructors). The project explores how much, what kinds, and from whom, individuals experience different types of unprofessional behaviours.

When asked if they felt that unprofessional behaviour, in general, was a problem at the university, almost half (49%) of respondents said yes. Forty-three percent said no (9% did not answer). One fifth (20%) believed that the problem was getting worse, while 43% felt that the level of unprofessional behaviour was about the same as it was the previous year.

The results indicate that the majority of members have experienced one or more types of unprofessional behaviours in the past year. Most members tried to address an incident using a range of strategies from ignoring the behaviour to filing formal grievances. An important finding is that three quarters (73%) of individuals felt that the strategies they had employed had not been effective.

Using results from a survey, interviews, and best practice literature, the project makes recommendations to help address unprofessional behaviour in the workplace. The recommendations includes both formal (rules and policies) and informal (communication skills, awareness building) strategies. As a starting point, this project is the first step in building awareness of the issue of unprofessional behaviour in the UNBC workplace.

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Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

There is a growing literature, both academic and popular, that is highlighting the existence of unprofessional behaviour. Research has emerged from different academic areas and, as a result, an assortment of 'names' for the same types of behaviour. One key characteristic underlying the research is the notion of civility. Civility encapsulates a set of agreed upon norms of respect for others that is necessary for a smooth functioning society (Andersson and Pearson 1999). Thus terms in the literature such as disrespectful, uncivil, unprofessional, and counterproductive, can be viewed as generally related and synonymous, although slightly different in conceptualizations. For the purposes of this paper, I refer to these different conceptualizations of behaviour as unprofessional behaviour.

There are two different, but related, approaches to this phenomenon of unprofessional behaviour. One looks at the number of particular incidents that fall into a category of behaviour defined as unprofessional. Thus, behaviours such as being rude or nasty to others, talking in a negative way about someone, yelling at, or behaving disrespectfully, are seen as examples of unprofessional actions that impact on other individuals in a negative way. The second approach looks at unprofessional acts as manifestations of a larger systemic problem, namely the escalation of a more disrespectful, self-centred, and uncivil culture. This latter approach identifies numerous causes for the increasingly discourteous and 'self-entitlement' culture, including the seemingly constant bombardment of rude and disrespectful behaviour portrayed as normal in the media, to the growing demands of a more rapid and demanding way of life. Technological advances such as emails, Blackberries, and cell phones, as well as increasing workloads, have served to create more pressure on individuals to produce more with fewer resources. The consequence is the eschewing of the 'niceties' of social interactions, such as

acknowledging colleagues when we encounter them at work, writing memos or emails in a manner that is unambiguously polite and civil, and taking the time to understand the impact of our words and actions on others (i.e., being empathetic and tolerant).

Although both approaches come from different angles, both concur that, as a culture and as individuals, we are increasingly losing our ability or desire to behave in a respectful, professional, or civil manner towards each other. At face value this does not appear to be a serious problem, particularly when compared to some of the more egregious behaviours in organizations that are reported in the media. A rude comment, or a nasty email, pales in comparison to the fatal shootings reported at universities in recent years. As a result, it is easy to overlook the negative impact such seemingly minor behaviours can have on individuals and workplaces when they occur routinely and become part of the organizational climate.

The research on unprofessional behaviour has nevertheless consistently and convincingly shown that relatively minor violations of norms of respect and civility, when experienced and witnessed by individuals over a period of time, create significant harm both to individuals and organizations. Cortina's recent study (2008) notes that

data are emerging to support theories that although [these behaviours] are subtle, [their] effects are not. Empirical research suggests that employees targeted ... are subject to great job stress and dissatisfaction, lower creativity, cognitive distraction, and psychological distress (2008, 56)

Studies have found that unprofessional behaviour has detrimental impact on key workplace factors. These include: a loss of productivity for those witnessing or experiencing this type of behaviour, increased disengagement of workers, higher rates of absenteeism and sabotage, lower job satisfaction, higher turnover cost, and other expenses that are difficult to quantify but do exist such as the work time taken by managers and others involved to address

conflict (Cortina et al. 2001; Pearson and Porath 2005; Pearson, Andersson & Wegner 2001; Vickers 2006). Indeed, the rise in long term disability costs due to stress-related illnesses has been linked with the increased level of unprofessional behaviour in workplaces that some have terms 'poisoned' or 'toxic' environments (Dessler et al. 2004, 311).

The focus of much of the research has been on private corporations, as well as the legal and health sectors. Despite this, there has been some research looking at the issue of unprofessional behaviour in university settings. A recent monograph by Twale and De Luca (2008) looked at incivility and the bully culture in universities. They argued that universities, a loosely coupled (or bicameral) system, where power resides both with the administration as well as with the academic body (through the Board of Governors and the Senate), might be more tolerant of unprofessional behaviour than other workplaces since the regulations on expected behaviour are less defined for academics. They note that the ubiquitous 'committee' structure found in most universities are structurally ideal for the festering of bullying 'behind the scene.' Academics can use the relative anonymity of committee structures to behave in ways or say things that they would not to the individuals being discussed in the committee. Indeed, one can make the claim that academia's paramount value, academic freedom, and the autonomy academics have had in defining their jobs in terms of research interest, teaching context, and how they allocate their time more generally, has led to a resistance by faculty to accepting any policies or contract language on conduct or standards of behaviour beyond very general boundaries to protect this freedom and autonomy.

Thus, there is a set of behaviours, unprofessional behaviour, which the literature identifies as typically falling below the radar of policies and rules regarding inappropriate behaviour because they are relatively low level acts. Despite this, the literature has shown that

these behaviours do exist in most organizations and they do have significant impact on both individuals and the organization.

The University of Northern British Columbia is not immune from such behaviours. There is significant anecdotal data to confirm the presence of unprofessional behaviour. Since there have been no formal investigations of how much and what types of unprofessional behaviour exists and how these behaviours are affecting individuals at UNBC, it is difficult to create rules or policies to address the problems that we know exist.

The purpose of this project is to take some initial steps in trying to understand the nature and type of unprofessional behaviour in the university setting by conducting an audit of the experiences of unprofessional behaviours among the UNBC Faculty Association members. Using established measures of behaviours that violate norms of respect, it is possible to quantify the existence of such behaviours among one major group in the university: professors, senior laboratory instructors, librarians, and instructors. These individuals are all members of a professional association certified under the British Columbia Societies Act; the Faculty Association. Through a mailed pen and paper survey, as well as interviews, I gathered concrete data on how much and what sort of unprofessional behaviour has been occurring at the university. The survey also explored how individuals have addressed incidents they have experienced, and looked at the awareness and the perceived effectiveness of the policies, processes, and procedures in place to address inappropriate behaviour. The major research questions in this project are:

1. How much and what kind of unprofessional behaviour do members of the Faculty Association members experience?
2. How are members addressing these experiences?

3. Do the strategies members use work effectively? If not, why?
4. Are the existing formal rules and policies known to the members?
5. Are the formal rules and policies effective for the forms of unprofessional behaviour which members report?
6. Are there factors, formal or informal, in the organization that are inhibiting people from speaking up when they face such events?

The second chapter of this report will explore the literature that informs the issue of unprofessional behaviour in organizations. This review provides a definition of unprofessional behaviour and looks at the various types of specific behaviours that fall into this concept. Further, the review will provide insight into key factors that need to be addressed when looking at such behaviours in the workplace. Chapter 3 outlines the methodology utilized in the project and Chapter 4 presents the results from the study. A discussion of the results and recommendations flowing there from, are laid out in Chapter 5. The last chapter provides a discussion of the limitations of the study, suggestions for further work and a conclusion to the project.

Introduction

Much of the focus on problem behaviour in the workplace has tended to be on serious incidents such as violence, discrimination and harassment, most notably, based on gender or race. Despite the continued importance of these matters in the workplace, this project looks at a set of behaviours that have only recently become visible. Andersson and Pearson's (1999) seminal paper on incivility in the workplace created a space for the exploration of behaviours that are problematic but do not constitute major violations of existing laws or policies. The set of behaviours in question can be defined as primarily breaches to civility and respect of others, such as yelling, insulting, gossiping, and ignoring someone. In the last two decades, there has been increasing attention from various disciplines to such behaviour under a variation of names.

Behaviours in search of a name

The literature, both popular and scholarly, has created a panoply of terms to identify 'inappropriate' workplace behaviours. Scholars from industrial relations, psychology, sociology, management, and human resources have created such terms as organizational delinquency (Hogan and Hogan, 1989); antisocial behaviour (Giacalone and Greenberg, 1997); incivility (Andersson and Pearson, 1999); workplace aggression (Baron and Neuman, 1996), petty tyranny (Ashforth, 1994), counterproductive work behaviour (Fox and Spector, 2005) and disrespectful behaviour (Truss, 2005) to try to describe inappropriate behaviour that ranges from disrespect and rudeness to bullying and aggression.

Recently, authors have called for a unifying concept to clarify and integrate the various forms of normatively unprofessional behaviours in the workplace (Fox and Spector, 2005; Neuman and Baron, 2003; Robinson and Bennett, 1995). Some of the more common terms

suggested include counterproductive behaviour (Fox and Spector, 2005); deviance (Robinson and Bennett, 1995); incivility (Pearson and Andersson, 1999); bullying (Salin, 2003); toxic behaviour (Frost, 2007), and psychological harassment (Québec, 2007).

I believe that each of these terms fails to capture the essence of the problem without imposing a normative or preconceived notion of the meaning of the action. For example, deviant behaviour tends to be seen as behaviour that is part of some antisocial or criminal behaviour; thus a deviant is one that does not fit in. Harassment is a concept that could cover all forms of unwanted behaviour but has come to be linked with one form – sexual. It consequently has the potential of hiding other important forms of psychological harassment. Psychological harassment is an increasingly common term, but fails to incorporate both physical and psychological acts and the effects of the behaviour which can be more than psychological. Finally, counterproductive work behaviour (CWB) is a unifying concept that has gained popularity in the literature. Given its overt focus on productivity, CWB seems to be a set of behaviours management would seek to eliminate in its workforce but it tends to overlook the impact of bad behaviour on individual and organizational well-being.

A suggested name: professionalism

The concept of ‘professional’ and the type of behaviour expected from individuals holding such positions is contrary to the set of problematic behaviours being studied, and as such is a more appropriate concept to utilize. Traditionally, the title of professional was limited to a few occupational groups that fit a specific set of criteria. Blackburn and McGhee (2004) describes the evolution of the concept as follows:

Goode (cited in Lawrence, 1999, p.53) claims that a useful way to distinguish professionalism is to view it as a continuum along which occupations may be placed according to their possession of certain key characteristics. On this basis, one could view many business roles as having particular (but perhaps not all) characteristics of

professionalism, especially a specialist body of knowledge and a service orientation. Dare (2003) defines a profession as “a vocation in which a professed knowledge of some department of learning is used in its application to the affairs of others.... (Dare, 2003, 3). He asserts that the terms profession and professional have ‘evaluative’ connotations they link professions and professionals with a set of desirable or honourable traits (i.e., their training, their skill and their commitment to a set of standards). (Blackburn and McGhee 2004, 3).

Blackburn and McGhee (2004) argue that business is a profession because it fits the above noted criteria. Using this argument, it is a small leap to include academics in a university setting, in this case, professors, senior laboratory instructors, librarians, and term instructions. Indeed, all have acquired a body of knowledge and in their roles provides a service to students in various capacities and to society in general.

The final part of Blackburn and McGhee’s argument, cited above, is most relevant to this discussion, namely that being a professional connotes acting in a particular manner. Indeed, most professions develop codes of conduct defining how individuals are expected to behave toward their clients and peers. Many academics, depending on their areas of speciality, belong to professional bodies such as social work, psychology, nursing, and other groups that define standards of conduct for registered members of that profession. In addition, as employees of the university, these individuals hold professional roles that put them in positions of power and trust that come with some expectations of respectful, trustworthy, and ethical behaviour. For example, the Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists (2000) is based on four principles: respect for the dignity of persons; responsible caring; integrity in relationship; and responsibility to society (2000, 2). These four principles are described in detail to members of the association and are expected to be the basis by which they make ethical decisions. As noted, the *Code* is intended to guide psychologists in their everyday conduct, thinking, and planning, and in the resolution of ethical dilemmas. (2000, 3).

“Unprofessional behaviour” captures all the minor forms of behaviours that intentionally seek to harm some individual(s) or the organization. Such behaviour violates “formal and informal organizational policies, rules, and procedures” (Robinson and Bennett 1995, 555). Robinson and Bennett (1995) argued that such violation can potentially make a workplace less than productive and less than inviting for some participants (Penney and Spector 2005; Fox, Spector, Goh, and Bruusema, 2007).

How common is unprofessional behaviour?

There is extensive evidence that unprofessional behaviour exists in many workplaces. Andersson and Pearson reported that “32% of Finnish respondents had observed others being exposed to verbally harassing behaviour at work” (1999, 3). A study of Canadian nurses by Graydon, Kasta, and Khan (1994) found that 33% of nurses had been exposed to verbal abuse in the previous five days. Cortina et al. (2001) found that 71% of their surveyed employees had reported some workplace incivility in the previous five years. Pearson and Porath note that 10% of a large American poll witnessed incivility on a daily basis at work and 20% said that they had been targeted at least once a week (2005, 7). A recent study by Goudswaard, found that 40% of health care workers in northern British Columbia surveyed had experienced an incident of behaviour defined as disrespectful (2007, 46).

Outcomes

Despite the subtlety of some unprofessional behaviour, it can have very tangible negative impacts on individuals and organizations. Cortina et al. (2001) found that those who had experienced incivility in the past five years were statistically more likely to demonstrate organizational withdrawal behaviour (e.g., turnover intentions). Experiences of unprofessional behaviour were positively correlated with psychological distress in general (e.g., symptoms of

depression and anxiety). Pearson and Porath (2005) found that half of the individuals who have been subject to such behaviour “will lose work time worrying about future interactions with the instigator” (2005, 9). Further, they note that in the ‘worst case’ employees will quit their jobs to get away from the behaviour, which results in turnover costs to the organization. In the ‘most extreme cases’, being subject to such behaviours can lead to aggression and violence.

It is highly unlikely that a disgruntled ex-employee will return as a workplace avenger, but experts on workplace violence caution that treating employees with anything less than respect and dignity at all times increases the odds of an aggressive response (Pearson and Porath 2005, 10).

Climate: Unprofessional behaviour and respect as norms?

An alternate way to view unprofessional behaviour is as a climate or a way of being and acting implicitly agreed upon by members of groups, including workplaces.

There is evidence that civility and respect may be eroding as norms in society and in organizations. Johnson and Indvik (2001b) note that such behaviours have “become an epidemic in the workplace....Our internal interpersonal infrastructure is breaking down,” and “it accounts for our rudeness to each other, our mistrust of and disrespect for each other” (2001b, 701).

One American study reports that 84% of human resource professionals said that their firms were experiencing increased hostile behaviour from workers (cited in Johnson and Invik 2001b, 700-702). Authors such as Lynne Truss (2005) and Mark Caldwell (1999) make the argument that there is a visible shift in norms in North American and European society away from behaviours that we would traditionally see as civil, respectful, and by definition professional behaviour. Truss argues that a culture of self-interest or a ‘me-first’ attitude has taken the place of consideration of others. Neuman and Baron (2003) state that the existence of unprofessional behaviour indicates a weakening or a failure of societal norms.

The pioneers in the field, Andersson and Pearson (1999), do not overlook this aspect of the concept. Indeed they agree that there has been a shift in society and organizations. They argue that there are structural shifts in the workplace and in society that makes it easier for such behaviours to occur.

Business has started to reflect the informality of society at large. Scholars have cited employee diversity, reengineering, downsizing, budget cuts, and increased pressures for productivity, autocratic work environments, and the use of part-time employees as causes for the increase in uncivil and aggressive workplace behaviour. (1999, 3)

In addition, Kearsley and Harvey (2005) have proposed that unprofessional behaviour, no matter what form it takes, is more common when the formal system of rules has greater tolerance for such violations. This tolerance for norm violations can be viewed as the extent to which these policies, programs and processes actually do what they purport to do (Kearsley and Harvey, 2005). As they write:

Consistent with the propositions of social learning theory, individuals were less likely to conform to group antisocial behaviour when there was a strong likelihood that they would be punished—in other words, the organization would not tolerate such behaviour (2005, 213)

In a similar vein, Carr, Schmidt, Ford and DeShon (2003, 605) argue that beyond the formal rules and regulations, organizations also can create distinct climates that influence how the rules and policies are perceived. They argue that these perceptions are seen as a critical determinant of individual behaviour in organizations, mediating the relationship between objective characteristics of work environment and individuals' responses (Carr et al. 2003, 605).

Thus, even when there are formal rules in place to prohibit or discourage unprofessional behaviour, if employees believe that such behaviours will be unlikely to be punished, then it is more likely that people will feel that they can behave in such a manner and/or believe that seeking

any resolution to having experienced such behaviour is unlikely to be successful. A study by Keashly and Jagatic (2003) found that employees who perceived their organizations to be low in terms of morale, quality of supervision and teamwork, and employee involvement are more likely to engage in unprofessional behaviour. Given this literature, it would seem reasonable to argue that differences could be observed not only across industries and organizations, but also within different groups in the organization. In a university, such as the one used for the case study, it is possible that different groups of individuals may demonstrate more or experience more unprofessional behaviour.

Reactions to unprofessional behaviours

Another goal of this project is to try to understand how individuals cope with such experiences. One of the earliest approaches to how individuals act or react to events in organizations is found in Albert Hirschman's work (1970) on exit, voice and loyalty. Hirschman argues that in organizational contexts individuals can express their dissatisfaction with unprofessional behaviour in three basic ways. Individuals can exit the situation by extricating themselves either temporarily [i.e., avoiding the perpetrator(s)] or permanently (through a transfer or leaving the institution). A second approach is to remain silent on a matter, thus exhibiting "loyalty" to the organization. Finder and Harlos (in Fletcher and Watson, 2008) differentiate silence as either "an acquiescent resignation which leads to disengaged behaviour or through a more quiescent fear-based pattern of self-protection. The third option identified by Hirschman (1970) is voice. Using voice refers to a range of potential actions and/or words from a whisper to a formal complaint. The underlying commonality in the use of voice is the speaking out against the experienced unwanted behaviour.

Given the range of possible reactions, a key question is how can we understand why individuals address unprofessional behaviour in the ways in which they do? Traditional studies

on voice or silence have looked at individual characteristics of the victim and perpetrator to understand how individuals react. Fletcher and Watson (2008) argued that individual level explanations are important, but that it is crucial to place such behaviours within their social context to better understand reactions to given actions. All behaviour occurs within specific contexts, and that this larger context plays a critical role when exploring how and why individuals use voice or remain silent. Thus how someone reacts to an experience of unprofessional behaviour will depend on the persons involved, the nature of the incident, the frequency of the behaviour, and the particular context, which includes a host of structural factors that can prohibit or facilitate certain forms of redress. Some of these structural factors include status of the individual, feelings of security (i.e., job tenure or continuing appointment versus term or tenure track), and support from the program, chair and/or senior administrators.

Constraints and facilitators

Early studies by Peters and O'Connor (1980) and more recently Spector and Jex (1998) found that organizations can, deliberately or not, create constraints that make things difficult for individuals. According to Peters and O'Connor, any situation or thing that prevented workers from maximizing their productivity at work was constraining the individual. Spector and Jex (1998) found that the more constraints individuals had in their job, the more likely they were to express dissatisfaction in their work, higher levels of stress, frustration and higher levels of intentions of quitting. This concept of job constraints can be applied to the unprofessional behaviour literature. One can define an organizational constraint as any person or situation that prevents an individual from seeking and getting resolution to the workplace unprofessional behaviour they have experienced.

There are other situations, elements, or individuals that can play a large role in either increasing the possibility of voice or constraining individuals from seeking resolutions to their experienced unprofessional behaviour.

Formal Policies and Rules

As discussed above, there are both formal and informal rules regarding unprofessional behaviour. The use of formal policy by individuals in situations where they encounter problems is influenced by the reaction of the chair or supervisor; receptiveness makes voicing a complaint much more likely. Another key factor is whether or not individuals are aware or are made aware of the formal resources available and how to use them. Merely because the rules are found in university policy or in the Faculty Agreement does not guarantee awareness by those who may find themselves in a situation where they are harassed or facing other forms of unprofessional behaviour. Fitzgerald (1990) notes that that how individuals handle the situation depends in part of how well they are familiarized with existing formal policies.

There is the assumption that members who ratify agreements have read them and are aware of the contents. But this is not always the case. Like other employment contracts, these agreements tend to be put aside until some problem arises. Given the literature, it is important to gauge the level of knowledge of various formal policies and procedures when evaluating reactions to unprofessional behaviour.

It is possible that members are fully aware of the existing bundle of strategies for dealing with unprofessional behaviour but feel that they do not work as effectively as other strategies. I propose to ask respondents to indicate their opinion on how well such programs and policies work under these circumstances. Miceli and Near (1985) note that fear of retaliation is minimized when

organizations engage in more communication regarding existing policies (in FitzGerald, 1990, 250).

The role of chair/supervisors

Formal and informal norms are learned in organizations through various means. One source of information, both formal and informal, is an employee's direct supervisor or chair. This individual plays an important role as a role model of acceptable behaviour in the workplace. A chair that is civil and respectful can provide a positive role model for members of the program to emulate. Clearly, the presence of a civil and respectful chair does not guarantee that program members will model such behaviour, but there is more likelihood they will than if the chair were not. Further, chairs or supervisors who fail to be civil and respectful can create toxic environments. Johnson and Indvik (2001a, 459) state that "bad managers tend to infect their departments with bad attitudes.

Chairs and supervisors are also first line management that have the responsibility to enforce formal policies on conduct. The UNBC Standard of Conduct requires members to bring their concerns of unprofessional behaviour to their chair/supervisor. How the chair behaves towards others will influence whether the member will bring a complaint forward. A chair/supervisor who demonstrates unprofessional behaviour is unlikely to be a chair/supervisor a member feels comfortable approaching on such matters.

Chairs/supervisors also differ in terms of their level of intolerance to such acts by being firm on those who violate the norms. Harlos (2001) notes that supervisors/chairs can either provide a supportive environment that encourages individuals to seek help and who will act on the request for help, or do the opposite. Harlos describes the latter as the deaf ear approach, where, regardless of whether the Chair actually hears the concern, nothing is done about it.

Fear of retaliation

Even if members are aware of the formal approach, they may not use it for to report events because they fear some form of retaliation for complaining. There is an extensive literature of 'whistle blowing' that demonstrates the potential negative consequences of speaking up when one feels a wrong has been committed. Members, particularly those without tenure or without job security may avoid speaking up about unprofessional behaviour fearing that those who have a role in determining their employment status will view them as complainers or not collegial. The literature does show that 'whistle blowers' have had more negative job evaluations and some have not been given promotions as a result of their whistle blowing (Near and Miceli, 1996).

Informal approaches

Beyond the formal channels, there are informal modes of responding to unprofessional behaviour. At one extreme individuals can decide not to do anything about the problem (i.e., choose not to use their voice). At the other extreme, they may retaliate. In between, they may talk to the person in question, or turn to peers and/or social support. Studies have found that peer and social support can play a positive role in coping. Keashly and Harvey (2005, 224) state that "one form of social support, talking to friends and family, has been referred to as a major form of coping in emotional abuse research."

Summary

In summary, there is a large and growing body of work that has focused on behaviours that are seemingly low level, unprofessional, uncivil, or discourteous. Typically organizations have some form of rules or safety regulations that define a safe environment, both physically and psychologically, and prohibit extreme behaviours.

Most of the behaviours categorized as unprofessional tend to be comments; actions or failures to act that can fall below the radar screen in terms of serious violations of organizational codes. Yet a collection of single acts perpetrated by one or a small number of individuals can be legitimately viewed as harassment, or suggesting possible unsafe and unwelcoming environments. To ensure that such a situation can be addressed, individuals must be aware that a given act when perpetrated over time, can and should be recorded and brought to the attention of those in the institution for consideration.

That said, many acts are one-offs that get addressed in a satisfactory manner. Either they are ignored and the individual does not repeat the behaviour or the individual speaks to the individual in question in a polite and professional tone and explains the situation from their eyes and they come to a satisfactory solution for both. One of the goals of this project is to explore the range of options used to address perceived violations of professional behaviour.

In order to address the key questions of this project, I use several different methods. The main method used in the project is a pencil and paper questionnaire that was sent through UNBC inter-campus mail. Surveys are efficient tools to use when the goal is to capture information from a large group on topics or with questions that can be answered in such a format and when the information being sought is attitudes and behaviour of those being surveyed.

Surveys alone are not sufficient to address some of the nuanced interactions between members when they experience unprofessional behaviour and seek to address it. Interviews allow individuals to provide supplementary information to that from the survey. In such interviews, it is possible to take one incident (or more) and address how the incident occurred, what the context was, what the reaction was to it, and the how individuals sought to address the incident. Thus, the interview provides a much richer picture of unprofessional behaviour than the data collected in the survey. These two approaches complement each other very well.

I also conducted interviews with key individuals in the university and the Faculty Association who, as a result of their responsibilities as agents of the University or Faculty Association, have information on the types of unprofessional behaviours they have observed or heard about in carrying out of their duties.

Survey

The survey (found in Appendix 1) contains questions on types of unprofessional behaviour, how individuals addressed such behaviour, and what their overall views are of such behaviour in their organization as a whole. Further, the survey asked members to report on their

perceived level of support, the nature and condition of their work, and their levels of satisfaction with their jobs.

Where possible, questions used were incorporated from existing and pre-tested survey instruments. The main component of the survey is found in the first question which is an index consisting of 16 different types of unprofessional behaviour, and how often any type had been experienced. The index used in the survey is derived from one of the most commonly used checklists in the field; the Counterproductive Work Behaviour Checklist-45 (CWB-C) (Fox and Spector, 2002). The CWB-C has been used in at least eleven studies and the researchers have amassed considerable data to support construct validity (Spector et al. 2007).

The CWB-C can be scored in different ways depending upon the specific purpose. The most basic division is two subscales reflecting the target, based on Robinson and Bennett's (1995) distinction of targets being either the organization or a person. The CWB-C (45) scale identifies 13 items that reflect CWB against persons. The coefficient alpha for this subscale is .85 suggesting strong internal consistency and validity. The CWB scale can also be broken down into five subsections: abuse, productive deviance, sabotage, theft, and withdrawal. Of these five sub-scales, abuse, fits the types of unprofessional behaviour that are the focus of this project. Spector et al, (2005) describe the scale in the following way:

Abuse consists of harmful behaviours directed toward coworkers that harm largely through nasty comments, ignoring the person, or making threats. These behaviours reflect aspects of emotional abuse (Keashly & Harvey, in press), workplace bullying (Rayner & Keashly, in press), and incivility (Pearson, Andersson, & Porath, in press). The distinction between these areas and CWB is that they focus on experiences of recipients whereas the CWB literature and the CWB-C focus on behaviours by those who commit them.

In studies conducted by Spector et al., results have found that this subscale is strongly and positively correlated with CWB-C (r squared = .94). The coefficient alpha of the abuse

dimension of the CWB is .81. For the purpose of this project the sub-component of abuse is a better fit for the types of behaviour of interest. In comparing the CWB-P on the 45 item index to the 'abuse' sub-scale on the CWB 33 item scale, the ones missing from the abuse scale involve refusing to help someone at work, stealing something belonging to someone else or stealing someone else's items. These types of behaviours are of less interest in this project than the types of behaviours on the abusive subscale.

In addition, some items from the Martin and Hine's (2005) uncivil workplace behaviour scale (UWBS) focused on two sub-items: hostility and gossiping. These items are very similar to those on the CWB scale, but focus on uncivil and disrespectful behaviour in a more differentiated way. Thus, "started an argument with you" remains as a question, but is supplemented by voice raising, inappropriate tone, using an aggressive tone and rolling of eyes. The latter four types [or actions] comprise what Martin and Hine refer as factor 1 (hostility) on the UWBS scale. The UWBS scale, like the CWB, has been used in studies and tested. The hostility factor (factor 1 sub-scale) has an alpha of .84. Thus these four specific types of actions all connect and represent one type of behaviour.

Since both measures use a Likert-type scale where individuals are asked to rate the event on a scale of 1 to 5, I believe that blending the two, adds detail to the study that would otherwise be missing if I used only one of the two scales.

Given that members of the Faculty Association interact with different groups in their job, they were asked to identify the types of actions they had experienced, by individuals in the following: (1) senior administrators - those who are senior to the individual's immediate supervisor; (2) immediate supervisors - the ones who make evaluation decisions and are identified as the persons to go to when the member has problems such as when the code of conduct is violated; (3) peers - co-Faculty Association members with whom they work either

directly or indirectly; and (4) students. The latter group was included because much of the daily work of the FA members is done in classrooms, laboratories, or the library, and as the main 'client' of FA members this group potentially has a significant impact on members.

Project question 1: How much and what sorts of unprofessional behaviour?

The survey was constructed in a manner that would allow me to answer the key research questions posed. First, "*How much and what sorts of unprofessional behaviours are members of the Faculty Association members experiencing?*" As noted above, the survey asked respondents to report on their experiences with various types of unprofessional behaviour in the past twelve months. Members were asked to identify from among sixteen incidents ranging in severity from a comment to being physically hit by someone. They were also asked to note if the behaviour(s) was/were from administrators, chairs/supervisors, colleagues, other staff, and students and how many times the incidents occurred.

Project Questions 2 and 3: How are members addressing these experiences? And do the strategies use work effectively? If not, why?

Two other key research questions I pose in this study are: "*How are members addressing these experiences?*" And: "*Do the strategies members use work effectively? If not, why?*" After exploring the different ways such information has been gathered in other studies, I believe that using a critical incident method is the most appropriate approach.

This approach required survey respondents who have cited at least one experience of unprofessional behaviour in the past 12 months to answer several questions on this experience. They were asked to think of the experience of unprofessional behaviour which they found most significant and then were asked a series of questions to help us understand coping strategies.

With respect to the critical experience, respondents were asked to explain the coping strategies they employed and the effectiveness of these strategies. It is expected that questions about why they coped in the way that they did and about what they believe would be better strategies will provide some suggestions that can aid in developing a stronger system of policies, process, and procedures.

Project Questions 4 and 5 Are the existing formal rules and policies known to the members? And: Are the formal rules and policies effective for the forms of unprofessional behaviour members report?

To ascertain whether members are knowledgeable regarding existing policies and programs, a second section of the survey looked at members' general knowledge about the policies, programs, and processes available to address unprofessional behaviour. Respondents were asked if they are familiar with the specific articles in the Faculty Association Agreement that address this issue. They were also asked if they are familiar with specific resources (i.e., institutional positions) in place to address such problems. This set of questions tapped into awareness and knowledge of formal norms against unprofessional behaviour.

Respondents were also asked if they believed the existing rules and regulations are effective in addressing the kinds of unprofessional behaviour discussed in the survey.

Project Question 6 Are there factors, formal or informal, in the organization that are inhibiting people from speaking up when they face such events?

The literature highlights a number of workplace factors, formal and informal, that can facilitate individuals using their voice and acting to stop the unprofessional behaviour they experience, and other factors that set up barriers or create circumstances that make it more

difficult to address the unprofessional behaviour incidents that occur. In order to explore this area, I look at some of the structural and interpersonal factors that have been identified in the literature and explore whether each or some of these factors play a role in inhibiting or facilitating members from using their voice.

Norms of behaviours differing between groups

It is possible that respondents are facing some unprofessional behaviour that is not an isolated event or attributable to one or two individuals. Rather there may be types of behaviour that are common or even pervasive within a group of individuals, suggesting the possibility of different norms in some groups.

To test whether this is the case, I pay close attention to the kinds of answers respondents give in talking about their experiences. Do individuals who perpetuate unprofessional behaviour seem to realize they have crossed a line if the behaviour has been brought to their attention? If so, then a norm for professional behaviour might exist. On the other hand, do others not care or not view their behaviour as unproblematic? I would expect to find comments such as they would not care or would not see their behaviour as problematic. In this case, one might assume the lack of a norm of professional or respectful behaviour toward others.

Relationship with and feelings toward chair/supervisor, program, and administration:

How the immediate chair or supervisor reacts to complaints by members can impact how and if the incidents are resolved for the member. These representatives of the organization can demonstrate a zero-tolerance for certain types of unprofessional behaviour by behaving in a professional manner and addressing unprofessional behaviour when it is reported or observed.

Feelings of how the organization as whole, beyond the first level of the administration, reacts to complaints can also influence how respondents cope with their experiences. Survey

respondents who have experienced a form of unprofessional behaviour will be asked to rate their perceptions of supervisory and administrative attitude toward employees voicing a complaint. Respondents will be asked to answer questions regarding their comfort with their supervisors, programs and institution.

Outcome measures and basic demographic information

The respondents were also asked to provide some basic sociodemographic data to help understand whether gender, tenure, job type, and level of job security had any connection with whether members experience unprofessional behaviour, and how, or if they found adequate strategies to address these incidents.

Some comments on the survey

Prior to sending the survey to members, I piloted tested the survey with individuals from all the representative groups (faculty, SLI, librarians, term instructors) to make sure that the questions were appropriate and the survey was understandable.

In gathering the data, I wanted to ensure that my response rate was as high as it could possibly be. The more responses I received, the more I can feel comfortable making generalization about the results in respect to the population in question. I used methods suggested by one of the masters of survey methodology, Dillman (2000), to maximize response rate.

Response rate is a key factor as the size of the sample that fills out and returns a survey plays a vital role in determining if the number of surveys returned is large enough and representative enough of the original population to allow a researcher to make any judgments regarding the population's perceptions and experiences the survey is probing. Given that members were asked to fill out a question, on the first page, a long list of incidents of

unprofessional behaviour, I wanted to make sure that there was enough interest that the survey would be compelling enough to take time to fill out. The following steps and timelines were used:

1. In mid-September, members were informed of the project and the survey in a quarterly newsletter sent to all faculty members.
2. In late October, a one page notice identifying the project and its purpose was sent to all the members. The notice also notified them that a survey would be coming in intercampus mail. The pre-notice was on bright yellow paper to help it stand out from the myriad of material members receive daily (a copy of the notices is in Appendix 2).
3. A week later, I sent out the packages including the survey, cover letter and consent letter; a self-addressed return envelope that members could use to return their completed surveys, and a yellow button with the slogan "my workplace includes respect". The latter was to bring to light the intent of the project. Some members did wear the pin, while others put them on their desk or corkboards in their office.
4. A week following the mail-out, members was advised by email that the survey had been sent and they should have received the package at this point. The email suggested that if they had not received their surveys and wanted to participate, they were asked to contact me and I would send a copy to them through intercampus mail.
5. A week later, members were sent a paper note through intercampus mail. The note thanked those who had taken the time to respond to the survey and encouraged those who had not had the time to do so yet to take some time to fill it out.
6. A final reminder was sent the first week of January, following a two week end of term break. The reminder was sent as an email with a PDF version of the survey attached. In this email I again thanked members for the strong response and informed those who had not yet had a chance to do so, that they had until January 18th (two weeks hence) to send in their surveys. If they had lost or misplaced their survey, the attachment could be printed off and returned.

I had looked at the responses I had received from Members up to that point and realized that there were very few surveys from term members relative to their population size. To

encourage more from this group to participate, I made a special plea to term members to consider filling out their surveys. This final notice did result in the return of a dozen surveys.

In the end, 105 of 260 members (40.4%) returned their surveys, a relatively healthy response rate.

Method of analysis of survey data: Excel and SPSS

The data collected from the 105 surveys were coded and entered onto an Excel spreadsheet and up-loaded to the SPSS statistical software. Using these statistical software packages I was able to explore the frequencies and the basic correlations between key variables. These will be addressed in Chapter 4.

Interviews with Members

To supplement the quantitative data compiled from the survey, I also conducted some informal discussions and more formal interviews with structured questions with members talking about their experiences with unprofessional behaviour. These interviews enabled me to get a richer view of how unprofessional behaviour can play out in specific contexts and circumstances. Such interviews also help me get richer data on details regarding specific incidents and situations. In total, I held 11 interviews with key stakeholders and 10 interviews with members who self-identified as wanting to talk.

Chapter 4 RESULTS

In this chapter, I explore the results of the study in order to answer the research questions posed in this study, namely:

- 1 How much and what sorts of unprofessional behaviour do members of the Faculty Association experience?
- 2 How are members addressing these experiences?
- 3 Do the strategies members use work effectively? If not, why not?
- 4 Are the existing formal rules and policies for dealing with such behaviour known to the members?
- 5 Are these formal rules and policies effective in dealing with the forms of unprofessional behaviour members report?
- 6 Are there factors, formal or informal, in the organization that are inhibiting people from speaking up when they face such behaviour?

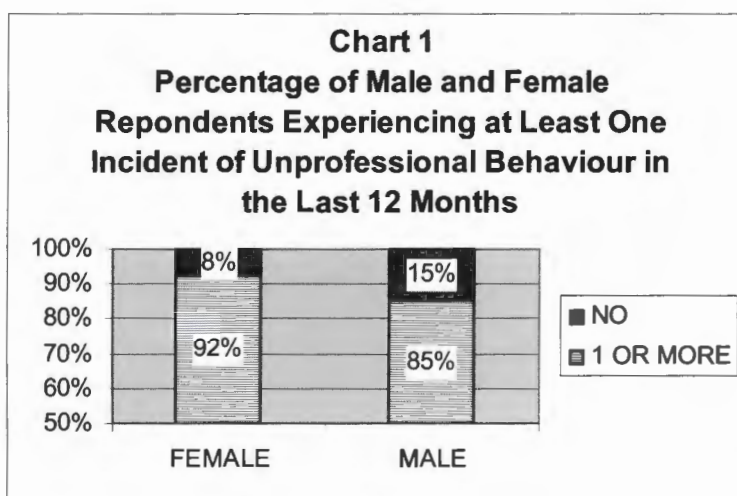
RESEARCH QUESTION 1: How much and what sorts of unprofessional behaviours do members of the Faculty Association members experience?

This project aimed to determine the frequency and types of unprofessional behaviour experienced by members of the Faculty Association. As noted, the only available data up to this point are anecdotal. Thus the first goal of the project was to find a baseline measure of the extent and nature of such behaviours.

Respondents were asked if they experienced different forms of unprofessional behaviour in the past twelve (12) months. Those who had experienced some form of the listed behaviours were asked to identify the source of the unprofessional behaviour: senior administrators; first line supervisors; peers; and students. Individuals were given the option of reporting no experience of the behaviour in question, or to identify whether they had experienced it 1-4 times; 5 or more times in the past year.

Eighty-five percent of respondents noted they had experienced at least one form of unprofessional behaviour at least once in the last year. The results clearly suggest unprofessional behaviour is an extremely common occurrence.

Chart 1 looks at the percentage of males and females who had experienced at least one incident of unprofessional behaviour in the past year. Ninety-two percent of women and 84% of men noted they had experienced one or more incidents of unprofessional behaviour in the past years. The differences were not statistically significant.



There are some interesting differences in the incidence of unprofessional behaviour across occupational groups. Though most members in every group report experiencing unprofessional behaviour at least one time per year, the lowest rates are among the full professors. Table 1 presents the percentage each occupational group stated they had experienced unprofessional behaviour.

Table 1 Percentage of Those Experiencing Some Unprofessional Behaviour by Occupational Group	
Full Professor	57%
Associate Professor	93%
Assistant Professor	92%
Lecturer	80%
Librarian	83%
Senior Lab. Instructor	80%
Term	89%
Occupation not available	69%

Unprofessional incidents reported by type of behaviour

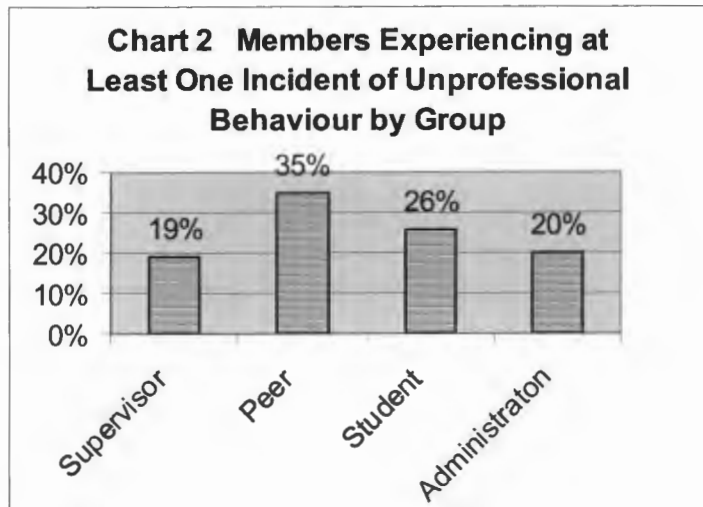
Table 2, below, presents the breakdown of incidents by type. When looking at the specific forms of unprofessional behaviour, we can see that more than 51% of members report someone making them “look bad” at work in some manner. Other common forms of unprofessional behaviour that can be identified include someone being nasty or rude (43%); receiving a disrespectful or rude communication (43%); and being addressed in a disrespectful manner (41%). Physical expressions of unprofessional behaviour such as obscene gestures (3%), physical threats (4%), and non-physical threats (12%) are relatively uncommon.

Based on these results, unprofessional behaviour occurs with some frequency within the context of the university (as reported by members of the Faculty Association). The literature suggests that such behaviours are relatively common in other work contexts and the anecdotal evidences available suggest that there are incidents of unprofessional behaviour. The value of the survey results is that they show more fully and more clearly what is occurring and by whom.

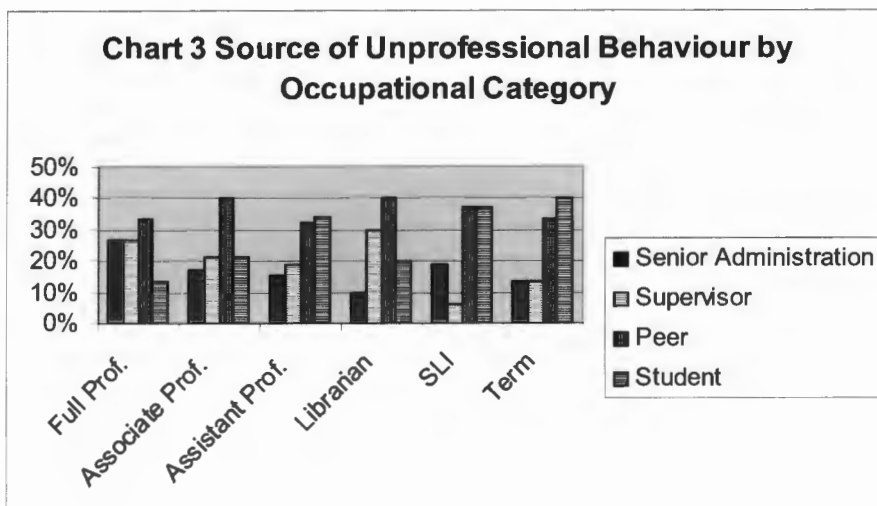
Table 2		
Unprofessional Behaviour Experienced at Least Once in the Past Twelve Months		
	Percent	Number
Did something to make you look bad at work	51%	64
Was nasty or rude to you at work	43%	47
Sent an e-mail, letter, or memo, that you found disrespectful or rude	43%	46
Said something disrespectful to you at work	41%	43
Used an inappropriate tone of voice	40%	42
Made a snide remark or gossiped about you	39%	41
Blamed you for their errors	37%	39
Insulted you about your work performance	33%	35
Spoke to you in an aggressive tone	32%	34
Rolled their eyes at you	31%	33
Purposely ignored you at work	30%	32
Started an argument with you at work	27%	29
Threatened you at work, but not physically	12%	13
Hit or pushed you at work	5%	5
Made an obscene gesture (the finger) to you	3%	3
Threatened you at work with violence	1%	1

Source of incident

As noted earlier, respondents were asked to identify the sources of the unprofessional behaviour they have experienced in the last year. (See Chart 2 below). The majority of incidents occurred between peers (35%) while experiences with students (26%), senior administration (20%) and chairs/supervisors (19%) were relatively less common.



There are some interesting differences when looking at which groups of perpetrators of unprofessional behaviour are most common for different occupational groups. As can be seen in chart 3, Term instructors, Senior Laboratory Instructors, and Assistant professors report the largest percentage of behaviour by students.



RESEARCH QUESTION 2: How are members addressing these experiences?

Members who experienced some form of unprofessional behaviour in the past year were asked to identify if and how they addressed the incident they are using as an example.

Respondents described a range of strategies, and many described two or more particular acts over a period. Table 3 outlines the frequency of the various options employed. Respondents were able to identify all the strategies they employed and were asked to list which of the responses were tried first, second, and so on.

The most common approach was to talk directly to the person who behaved unprofessionally. Talking to peers and another person (supervisor, chair, manager or FA representative) are other relatively common approaches. Almost one fifth of respondents opted to do nothing in face of the incident.

Some of the actions in the “other” category include seeking legal counsel and attempting to empathize with the person. In one reported case, a member acted back in kind when faced with an unprofessional incident. Clearly there is a variety of options when faced with one or more incidents of unprofessional behaviour.

Table 3 Strategies to Address Experiences of Unprofessional Behaviour		
Action employed by those experiencing unprofessional behaviour	Number	% of total actions taken
Discussed the matter directly with the other person/people	31	23%
Did nothing	26	19%
Talked to peers about the event	24	18%
Talked to a supervisor, chair, manager, and/or Faculty Association representative	20	15%
Assumed that either the person was having a bad day or that I could have misinterpreted the situation	11	8%
Filed a formal complaint	11	8%
Other	9	7%
Requested mediation	4	3%
Acted in kind back at the person (retaliated)	1	1%

RESEARCH QUESTION 3: Do the strategies members use work? If not, why not?

Respondents were asked if their response, including doing nothing, was effective. Of the 51 respondents who identified a problem and answered the section on voice in the survey, 73% (37) felt that their approach had not successfully addressed their experiences while less than a third (27% or 14) felt that their strategies were effective in addressing the matter. Of those who reported satisfaction with the outcome most noted that they were able to discuss the matter with the other person and found the communication was effective. Talking to the other person was the most common option overall. Other common options were to talk to peers or turn to their supervisors for assistance. Talking to peers is a common approach for individuals experiencing unprofessional behaviour.

During personal interviews, several respondents noted that talking to peer can provide suggestions about how to address the problem, but in most cases, peers can provide support for

the member. Talking to peers is a strategy that has been identified as helping individuals cope. Others noted that talking to peers did not address the problem. Mixed results were found for talking with chairs or supervisors. In some cases these individuals were able to help the respondent address the problem through intervention. A number of individuals facing problems with students or other individuals found that their chair or supervisors were able to intervene in the matter or provide an environment where the problem could be resolved. One noted that their supervisor and dean recognized the gravity of the incident and held the person accountable and were supportive.

In some cases, respondents felt that talking to their chair or supervisor did not help. Some members felt that their chair or supervisor did not help or indicated that their attempts to gain help, either from the FA or others, were unsatisfactory. Others felt chairs are limited in their abilities to address such behaviours as they are not violations of specific policies. Some respondents noted that chairs were the perpetrators of the unprofessional behaviour. In some cases, individuals felt that addressing the behaviour directly was too risky, either because the member was junior or was on contract or because he/she feared retaliation.

RESEARCH QUESTION 4: Are the existing formal rules and policies known to the members?

Members were asked how familiar with certain central policies and with the duties of the Harassment and Discrimination Officer (H&DO), the Grievance Officer (GO), and the Dispute Resolution Officer (DRO), whose jobs are to help members address issues of proper conduct. The three positions are distinct. The GO is mandated to address problems and questions members may have with respect to violations of the Faculty Association agreement. The H&DO provides advice and act on matters related to either the UNBC harassment and discrimination

policy (article 42C in the Agreement). The H&DO can advise on the Standards of Conduct policy (Article 42B), but the person that is responsible to administer the Standard of Conduct is the supervisor. Although both policies are covered in the Agreement, they are also University policy and thus all members of the University community must conform to these standards. The third position is that of the DRO. This is a new position with a mandate of addressing both proactively and remedially interpersonal conflict between members of the Faculty Association.

The results of the survey indicated a limited awareness of the policies and of these three positions. As can be seen in Table 4, below, most respondents are not aware of the policies or the three main officers who are contact points for addressing matters of harassment, conduct that violates the code, and interpersonal conflict. Given that some of the unprofessional behaviours, including threats, both physical and non-physical, as well as other more serious unprofessional behaviour, should be reported to an officer who can help in addressing the matter in a formal manner (i.e., through existing policies), the level of awareness of the formal policy is a matter of concern.

Table 4				
Awareness of Policies and Duties of Officers that Address Health & Safety				
Are you aware of the following policies	Yes % N	Somewhat % N	No % N	No answer/ don't know
UNBC 's Harassment and Discrimination policy	22% (23)	21% (25)	56% (55)	1% (1)
The Standard of Conduct policy	15% (16)	36% (37)	44% (46)	6% (6)
UNBC emergency response to inappropriate, disruptive or threatening behaviour	11% (11)	52% (55)	36% (39)	1% (1)
Safety regulations concerning work conditions	25% (26)	23% (24)	51% (63)	2% (2)
Are you familiar with the duties of the:				
Grievance Officer	25% (26)	24% (24)	51% (53)	2% (2)
Harassment Officer	18% (19)	29% (30)	53% (55)	1% (1)
Dispute Resolution Officer	31% (39)	11% (11)	51% (51)	1% (1)

It is possible that lack of information is linked to the number of years at the university; those with fewer years of experience may be less familiar. The results do not support this idea. Looking at the length of tenure and knowledge of policies and officers (Table 5) suggests that with some few exceptions, most members regardless of length of tenure are not familiar with the policies or officers.

Table 5 Years of tenure and lack of awareness of the following (the table reports on those who noted they did not know the policy or person)			
Are you aware of the following policies --	0 to 4 years	5 to 10 years	11 or more years
UNBC 's Harassment and Discrimination policy	43% (10)	65% (17)	71% (17)
The Standard of Conduct policy	35% (13)	54% (14)	54% (13)
UNBC Emergency Response to Inappropriate, disruptive or threatening behaviour	38% (14)	15% (4)	50% (12)
Safety Regulations Concerning work conditions	57% (21)	58% (15)	50% (12)
Are you familiar with the duties of the:			
Grievance Officer	51% (20)	54% (14)	50% (12)
Harassment Officer	51% (20)	54% (14)	50% (12)
Dispute Resolution Officer	51% (19)	50% (13)	63% (15)

RESEARCH QUESTION 5: Are the University's formal rules and policies effective for addressing unprofessional behaviour

Members were asked to rate, on a 5 point Likert-type scale, their impressions whether the formal policies and processes helped to create a good climate. Table 6 shows respondents' views regarding the effectiveness of these policies and processes. Forty-five percent strongly or somewhat agreed that the policies and processes were helping while one-third (29%) believe that they did not. There were some individuals who stated that they were not familiar enough with the policies and processes to comment (i.e., those in the missing category). Given the results cited in Table 4, one should be careful in interpreting the results from Table 7. That is, the results can be

viewed as an overall impression of effectiveness without assuming that all members are familiar with every policy and process since Table 4 suggests that many are not.

Table 6		
Policies and Processes Promote a Good Climate		
	%	n
Strongly agree	10%	10
Somewhat agree	35%	37
Neither agree not disagree	13%	14
Somewhat disagree	13%	14
Disagree strongly	16%	17
No answer	2%	2

PROJECT QUESTION 6: Are there factors, formal or informal, in the organization that inhibits people from speaking up when they face unprofessional behaviour?

One factor that plays a role in whether individuals who experience unprofessional behaviour seek redress is whether they feel that the overall climate is tolerant of such behaviours. Respondents were asked whether they perceived that unprofessional behaviour was an overall problem in the institution. The results can be seen in Table 7. Almost half of the respondents (49%) felt that unprofessional behaviour was a problem. Fewer, but almost as many, felt it was not (43%).

Table 7 Perceptions of Unprofessional Behaviour as a Problem in Organization		
	%	Number
Yes	49%	51
No	43%	45
Missing	9%	9

Breaking down the previous results by gender, males (58%) were more likely to regard unprofessional behaviour as a problem than females (42%). In terms of job security, 56% of those on a probationary or tenure track position feel that unprofessional behaviour was a problem compared to 44% of those with a continuing appointment or with tenure.

Looking at specific occupational groups at the University, the results suggest that librarians and senior laboratory instructors (70% each) were slightly (but not statistically significantly) more likely to regard unprofessional behaviour as a general problem than other groups. Term instructors and lecturers (62% and 60% respectively) were also more likely to believe unprofessional behaviour was a University problem. Assistant and associate professors were the least likely (29% each) to believe it so while full professors were, interestingly, more likely to regard unprofessional behaviour as common (67%).

Is it getting worse?

Respondents were also asked whether, in their opinion, there has been a change in the frequency of unprofessional behaviour in the past year. As Table 8 notes, most people believe the level has remained the same in the past year, while one fifth felt that it was getting worse.

Only 3% believed that unprofessional behaviour was decreasing. It is important to note that a third of individuals either noted they did not know or did not answer the question. This is a substantial percentage and needs to be explored in further detail in a later study.

Table 8 Is Unprofessional Behaviour becoming More Frequent?		
	percentage	Number
Same	43%	45
Increased	20%	27
Decreased	3%	3
No answer	29%	30

Views on collegiality and respect within the university and in programs.

Respondents were asked if they agreed with the statement that the university climate is a collegial one, where people in general want to help others where they can, and whether they felt they felt that the environment is respectful. They were asked the same question of the members of their program or unit. The results found in Table 9 indicate a more positive view of collegiality in programs. Looking at overall agreement (strongly and somewhat agree) respondents were more likely to agree with the statement that collegiality was present in their program than they were that it was present generally at the university. Despite the differences, the results indicate that a majority of members felt that collegiality was present at both levels.

Table 9 Respondents' Perception of Collegiality and Respectfulness

Collegial at university level			Collegial at program level		
Strongly Agree	18%	19	Strongly Agree	37%	39
Somewhat agree	46%	48	Somewhat agree	33%	35
Neither agree not disagree	13%	14	Neither agree not disagree	8%	8
Somewhat disagree	17%	18	Somewhat disagree	14%	14
Disagree strongly	5%	5	Disagree strongly	7%	7
No answer	1%	1	No answer	2%	2
Respectful at university level			Respectful at program level		
Strongly Agree	16%	17	Strongly Agree	39%	39
Somewhat agree	46%	48	Somewhat agree	31%	33
Neither agree not disagree	15%	16	Neither agree not disagree	11%	12
Somewhat disagree	16%	17	Somewhat disagree	11%	12
Disagree strongly	6%	6	Disagree strongly	5%	5
No answer	1%	1	No answer	2%	2

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION AND BEST PRACTICES

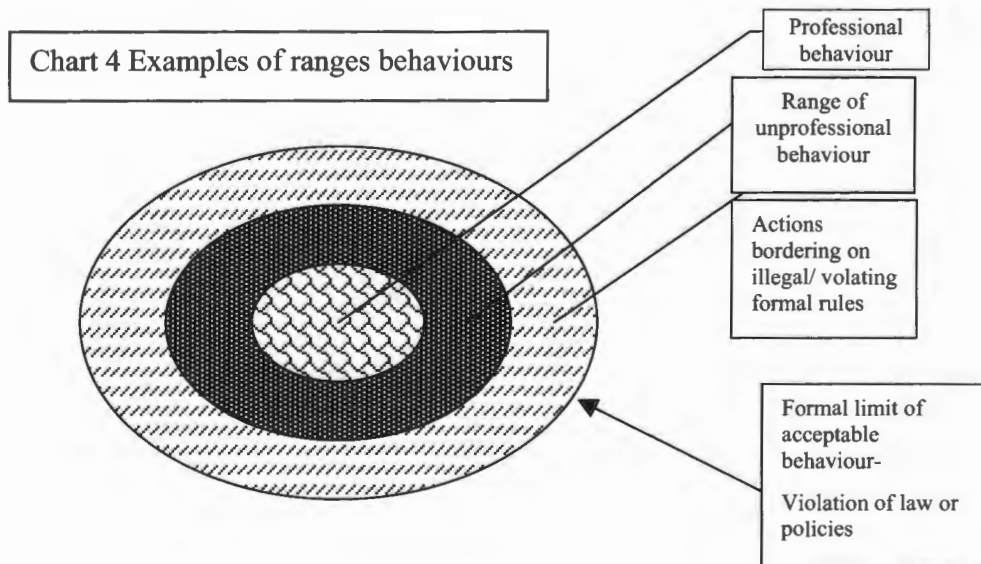
The results of this study, from both the survey and the interviews, indicate that unprofessional behaviour is a matter that touches most people during their work life at UNBC. The experiences of members spread across the majority of the sixteen behaviours listed on the survey question on unprofessional behaviour (see Appendix 1, survey question 1). The most common types of behaviours were centered on rude or disrespectful communication, both verbal and written. There were some who reported more aggressive acts (i.e., giving someone “the finger”; threatening someone with physical harm, and threatening someone with non-physical harm), but these are relatively rare. The rarity of more aggressive acts is not surprising given that physical manifestations of anger and conflict are normally frowned upon in university settings. Further, in such cases, there are mechanisms in place to address such matters (such as the UNBC Standard of Conduct, the Harassment and Discrimination policy or the Article on Emergency Response to Inappropriate, Disruptive or Threatening behaviour) and individuals to approach with such issues (i.e., grievance officer, the disputer resolution officer, or the harassment and discrimination officer).

There is clearly a need for formal policies to establish firm limits to interpersonal interactions. The law and the desire to establish a safe workplace requires boundaries between behaviours that are acceptable and those that violate the norms of acceptable or legal behaviour. The formal policy also serves to define (in order to educate) these extremes of acceptable and to impose sanctions on individuals who fail to adhere to these rules. Formal rules typically address the the most serious violations of a given behaviour, thus provide an outer boundary.

People working in an organization must be made aware of the rules and regulations, and understand them. Individuals also need to be informed of the ways in which they can seek

redress if they have been subject to unacceptable behaviour (e.g., discrimination, harassment, threats of violence).

Between the formal boundaries that are defined in policy and process and desired professional behaviour is a large range of behaviour that increasingly deviates from the norm or expected set of behaviour. One can picture circles within circles (see Chart 4) where the outer ring of the largest circle are the behaviours that violate the law or are serious enough to be completely unacceptable. The inner circles vary to the extent they approach the limits of the outer circle.



Although extreme forms of unprofessional behaviours are covered under the formal mechanisms in place at the University and in the Faculty Association Agreement, there are no formal avenues to address the 'milder' levels of unprofessional behaviour explored in the project (the circles closer to the inner circles in Chart 4). The exception would be a situation where

milder levels of behaviours were repeatedly experienced by an individual that as a whole would constitute a more serious form of harassment under the Standard of Conduct.

The usefulness of the policy in addressing such issues should be questioned based on comments made by members as well as the individual (i.e., the member's Chair/Supervisor) who is responsible for administering the code. I believe, and the existing literature supports the contention, that a large part of the problem may be linked to a lack of recognition of the seriousness of unprofessional behaviour and its potential impact on individuals and organizations.

Recognition of the problem

When I first began the project, I spoke to many faculty members about what I wanted to do. Some were very encouraging and noted that they had seen or experienced some of the behaviour that we define as unprofessional. There were others who thought that this topic might not be a particular fruitful one, either because there were likely to be few reported cases or that people who experienced such behaviours are perhaps 'more sensitive' and making too much of behaviour that is common. In my years at the university, I have personally experienced or been made aware of enough unprofessional behaviour to believe that, at least for a significant number of people, unprofessional behaviour was a problem. This is not to say that unprofessional behaviour is ubiquitous and that it touches all aspect of the institution. The data suggest, rather, that many people have experienced some form of unprofessional behaviour and that a significant number of individuals feel that unprofessional behaviour is a problem at the University. The data collected here can serve as evidence to those who have not seen or experienced unprofessional behaviour that it does exist and for those who have experienced it, that it is not a problem only a few experience. It is a problem and it does affect most of the members of the Faculty Association to some degree. As such it needs to be made visible.

This project and the survey served as a tool to raise the awareness of the existence of unprofessional behaviour by operationally defining it (in question 1 of the survey) and asking respondents to think about incidents they have experienced and witnessed and how these events affected them. Thus, the project was an instrument that not only enabled me to create baseline data, but also served as a 'consciousness raising' process for individuals who either had experienced or witnessed such behaviour to view these experiences as legitimate matters that deserve attention, and it also served to highlight a set of behaviours that we all should monitor as we interact on a daily basis in the university community.

In the 1979, Catharine McKinnon published a book entitled *Sexual Harassment of Working Women*. The book addressed a 'problem' women were experiencing in the workplace, namely *sexual harassment* that had up until a few years earlier been nameless.¹ Although common today, there was no formal recognition of this type of behaviour as unprofessional prior to McKinnon's book. In the context of this project, 'unprofessional', is defined as a violation one or more established (formal or informal) norms either codified in law or policies or agreed upon by a group of individuals.

The importance of 'naming' something is that it allows us to view it as an act that can be judged vis-à-vis existing norms, formal or informal. In the case of sexual harassment, naming the behaviour as an inappropriate act made it real and allowed it to be recognized as serious enough that it should be addressed by policies and legislation.

¹ It is argued that Catharine MacKinnon and members of a consciousness rising session at Cornell in 1974 conceived of the term sexual harassment to explain a pattern of negative behaviours women were experiencing. (Dinner 2006).

Prior to this, the 'problem' was an aspect of work women had to put up with and deal with in informal ways such as avoiding being alone with certain people. Collinson and Collinson (1996) note that prior to its formal recognition, workplaces typically had informal communication channels that were used to inform new female workers to avoid specific individuals and locations where such behaviour was more likely to occur.

More than two decades later, sexual harassment has become a common term. It has been widely recognized in the legal system and employers are required to provide workplaces free of such harassment. The provincial government and federal governments have Human Rights Codes to prevent harassment and discrimination of individuals based not only on sex but also on a number of other grounds.² Recent Supreme Court decisions have confirmed that employers are liable for acts of sexual harassment by their employees and are required to have rules in place to ensure that such behaviours are appropriately penalized (Cantin 2000; Pohl 2000). Some researchers have suggested that sexual harassment has probably received the most attention in the media, the academy, and the law (Lim and Cortina 2005).

Despite this recognition, the problem of sexual harassment has yet to be 'solved.' Sexism, like other forms of harassment, continues in the workplace and in society. What has happened in the past several decades is that courts explicitly defined certain acts as inappropriate and provided recourse in cases where individuals have been exposed to sexual harassment.

While education and formal policies are powerful tools to solve matters, and have come a long way to redress the situation it is clear that they cannot solve the entire problem. Shifting

² In British Columbia that recognized grounds in the Human Rights Code are race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, family status, physical disability, mental disability, sex, age, sexual orientation, political beliefs or criminal or summary conviction offence unrelated to their employment.(Article 42a, 2006-2010 FA agreement).

attitudes and norms regarding behaviour can take a great deal of work. The formal banning of an act is the necessary first step to shaping individuals' normative thinking and changing behaviour.

My goal is to address forms of unprofessional behaviour in the workplace that tend to fall under the radar of existing policies, processes, and procedures, and to increase awareness and appreciation for the severity of unprofessional behaviour. Just as sexual harassment has gone from a problem in the workplace to a legal concept, other forms of unprofessional behaviour such as manipulation, incivility, disrespect, bullying, and petty tyranny, will come to be seen for what they are, harmful to individuals and counterproductive to organizations, recognized by individuals and organizations as unprofessional, and addressed formally by codes of conduct that discourage these toxic behaviours.

When the behaviour is recognized as a problem

Using the information gathered from the survey, it is possible to use the data to focus on possible solutions. The results suggest that many people were unfamiliar with the formal rules and positions of officers who could be helpful in situations where individuals experienced unprofessional behaviour. One key factor that may inhibit the reporting of unprofessional behaviour may be the lack of knowledge about the various options available to members when faced with such problems. Thus a key recommendation emerging from this project is that the Faculty Association needs to be more pro-active in making information available to members on the contents of the policies and on who the officers are and what they do. I suggest that this information be presented to employees on a regular basis (like an annual flu shot).

There are a number of resources that can be used such as posting information on the policies and the mandate of the officers on the Faculty Association webpage so members can

inform themselves of the roles and have an idea who they can approach if the encounter problems interacting with others in the organization. Further, the Faculty Association communicates with its members through newsletters, emails, and at general meetings, and these can be forums to use to educate members about the services available.

Growing Legal Recognition

There is growing awareness in Canada that unprofessional behaviours in all their manifestations are inappropriate. Indeed, employers are increasingly being held accountable for the existence of such behaviour in the workplace. The Supreme Court of Canada recognized that employers “owe a general duty to ... employees to take care to provide a safe workplace” (Roher 1999, 10).

The concept of ‘safety’ has grown from the minimal standards found in the Occupational Safety and Health Act and protection from harassment and discrimination, based on the Human Rights grounds, to encompassing a variety of inappropriate behaviours in the workplace including ‘psychological harassment’ and other forms of inappropriate behaviour. In a 1993 case (Janzen v. Platy Enterprises), the Supreme Court ruling noted that “regardless of the form of harassment at issue, the harassment must be harshly condemned and appropriate penalties imposed on those who commit it” (Cantin 2000, 21).

From a liability point of view, employers are being increasingly held accountable for ensuring the workplace is free from violence and bullying.

Employers are being held liable not only for keeping physical violence out of the workplace, but also for ensuring workers is not subjected to harassment or bullying, both of which are viewed as psychological violence.” (Gibson 2007, 1).

In the same article, Gibson, a legal expert, notes that “obligations on employers to ensure safe and harassment-free workplaces have become more onerous in recent years and the trend is consistent across Canada.” (2007, 1)

Some jurisdictions such as Québec and have passed legislation that prohibits ‘psychological harassment’ in the workplace. The legislation requires employers to address proactively problems of bullying and harassment in their workplaces. In a pamphlet distributed by the Québec government, the obligation is stated in the following manner:

All employers of Québec, whether they belong to the private sector or the public sector, are covered by the new provisions of the Act respecting labour standards, the objective of which is to ensure that the workplace is free from psychological harassment. Employers are required to take reasonable steps to prevent and put a stop to psychological harassment when they are informed of such a situation. (www.cnt.gouv.qb.ca, 2007)

In a different move, the Saskatchewan government has embedded its harassment policies in the Occupational Health and Safety legislation and has recently defined harassment in a broader manner than Human Rights. Like its Québec counterpart, it has included psychological harassment, encompassing bullying and other forms of unprofessional behaviour. One of the major impacts in embedding harassment in an Occupational Health and Safety Act is that such acts tend to have a more proactive approach to employer responsibility. For example, the Saskatchewan Act requires employers “to develop and implement policy to *prevent harassment in the workplace*. This wording puts the onus on the employer, in collaboration with the health and safety committee, to create policy that is proactive –to prevent harassment rather than react to it and to provide avenues of redress if harassment occurs (www.labour.gov.sk.ca/safety/fast/harassment.htm 2007).

Traditionally, employers have treated issues of harassment and discrimination in a reactive way. The main piece of legislation addressing the issue in British Columbia is the BC Human

Rights Code which allows for complaints to be made. That is, people who feel discriminated or harassed on the basis of the stated Human Rights grounds (e.g., gender, race, sexual orientation, age) have the right to launch complaints using the Human Rights Code. This is a complaints-based model; despite the statement that employers are responsible for creating harassment free workplaces, there are no sanctions beyond individual complaints under this Code.

Given the trend of the courts to increasingly find employers legally liable for failing to prevent such behaviours, Québec and Saskatchewan's moves are likely the first of much pro-active legislation (Gibson 2007).

Complying to the changing legal environment

There are varying levels of compliance with the new legal regime regarding health and safety in organizations. As noted above, some provinces have moved to create legislation that requires employers to ensure that they provide workplaces free of psychological harassment (e.g., Québec) or embedding harassment language within the Occupational Health and Safety Acts (e.g., Saskatchewan), which requires a pro-active approach to safety.

Some organizations have taken active steps to developing safe and healthy work environment. For example, the Northern Health Authority in British Columbia several years ago implemented a "respect in the workplace policy and program" that incorporates training and education and sets a standard of conduct, as a result of recommendations made by a report by the British Columbia Office of the Auditor General. The report, called *In Sickness and Health: Healthy Workplaces for British Columbia's Health Care Workers*, recognized the high cost of unhealthy workplaces and recommends pro-active behaviour to create healthy environments.

These recommendations included doing an audit of the work environment and taking proactive steps to create a healthy work environment. (BC Auditor General 2004; Goudswaard 2007).

Concordia University, following the tragedy of the Fabrikant case, created a Code of Rights and Responsibilities that enshrines the right to a safe and civil work environment (Concordia policy BD-3). The Code created an Office of Rights and Responsibilities with a full time officer to help individuals, students, faculty, and chair, with problems ranging from how to deal with issues of harassment to how to enforce policy on those responsible for behaving badly. The office is charged with ensuring the Code is communicated and that help is accessible to those who need to use it. Such reactions to tragic events are laudable but measures should be taken before tragedy creates the need to do so.

Changes such as those discussed above can move the organization in the direction of accepting no less than professional behaviour in the workplace. Some of the recommendations can be implemented with little time or cost; other require more formalized and systemic review of the organization and collective change in how the organization defines and lives out its core values.

There is a caveat regarding formal regulations and policies. To be effective, a policy or law must be known by all individuals (or made available in such a ways as a reasonable person should have known) and the prohibited behaviours must be outlined in a manner that is clear and people understand what is and isn't acceptable. Further, there must be a willingness to implement the policy; both in terms of ensuring that individuals who have experienced a violation of the rules know who to address their complaints to and that making a formal complaint does not result in any retaliative behaviour. Lastly, those who are identified as responsible for its implementation under the policy or article must be receptive to a complaint

and willing to act on the complaint. If there is no willingness to use the policy then such policies will have absolutely no effect on changing behaviour.

Self-Monitoring: Professional vision for Faculty Association members

One increasingly common strategy for organizations is to create a core body of values and beliefs that provides a vision of what professionals should aspire to, both in values and behaviour. Contrary to the traditional prescriptive codes that define what behaviours are not acceptable or inappropriate, a professional vision stresses key values by which individuals interact with each other, students, the university community and larger society.

As Blackburn and McGhee note, “professionals are usually not interested in the rhetoric of do’s and don’ts, rights and wrongs, good and bad” (2004, 3). I would argue that in the university context, with the strong desire not to infringe on freedom of speech, the view of prescriptive rules on behaviour has been particularly negative.

Codes of ethics vary from those that are prescriptive, that is defining what behaviours are not allowed and the consequences of the violation of these rules, to those that are aspirational involving a shared vision or shared values. The latter such codes are best not imposed on workers, but ideally developed and voluntarily adopted by members of the organization or professional group.

Such codes are found in many professional organizations such as the BC Nursing Association, BC Association for Social Workers, Canadian Psychologist Association, and Association of BC Foresters. These groups have developed and adopted codes of conduct to which members must address. These codes often are a mixture of prescriptive behaviour and stated

values. For example the Canadian Association of Nursing has eight values including confidentiality, dignity, choice, justice and accountability (2002, 6).

The Canadian Code of Ethics for psychologists produced by the Canadian Psychological Association “articulates ethical principles, values, and standards to guide” (2000, 7) its members. The introduction explains clearly the relationship between professional autonomy and societal responsibility:

Every discipline that has relatively autonomous control over its entry requirements, training, development of knowledge, standards, methods, and practices does so only within the context of a contract with the society in which it functions. This social contract is based on attitudes of mutual respect and trust, with society granting support for the autonomy of a discipline in exchange for a commitment by the discipline to do everything it can to assure that its members act ethically in conducting the affairs of the discipline within society; in particular, a commitment to try to assure that each member will place the welfare of the society and individual members of that society above the welfare of the discipline and its own members. By virtue of this social contract, psychologists have a higher duty of care to members of society than the general duty of care that all members of society have to each other (2000, 7).

Thus a code is intended to be a guide for decision-making, action, and thinking in terms of key values shared by members. Beyond defining values that each member is expected to strive towards, the guide defines what each value means, and provides examples and provides ethical standards that enable individuals to understand, for example, the need to act in a manner that upholds the dignity of the person and integrity in relationships. There are possible sanctions for violating the code. The Canadian Psychological Association has a reporting structure that makes it possible for those with concerns regarding the ethical behaviour of a registered member to voice that concern.

Many members of the Faculty Association also belong to professional bodies such as the ones discussed above. The professions that have such codes tend to be those who have a responsibility of care for individuals not in the profession.

Interestingly, professors, librarians, SLIs and other members of the Faculty Association do not have such a code, despite their responsibility to care for students. A search of the national body of professional post-secondary educators, the Canadian Association for University Teachers (CAUT), yields no code of ethics for the profession as a whole.

The Faculty Association at this university has a Standard of Conduct as well as rules regarding conflict of interest that define the boundaries of acceptable behaviour. It also has a purpose statement for the Faculty Association Agreement (Article 1.1) stating that the parties “agree to work co-operatively towards improving the quality of education and to promote a climate of freedom, responsibility and mutual respect in the pursuit of UNBC’s goals.” Academic Freedom is defined as an essential factor for members in conducting their roles as professionals. What appears to be missing is a statement of core values of respect of individuals. The University motto, *En Cha Hunà*, addresses the principal values of respect and appreciation of diversity, as well as academic freedom. These basic values would be necessary in any statement of value or a vision that is created.

Learning how to live the vision

Establishing a professional vision is only the first step in creating a climate that fosters professionalism. The vision must be one that the members believe in and accept as reflecting the kind of values the profession upholds.

Learning what such concepts as respect and valuing differences looks like is also crucial. What does being respectful mean? What kinds of attitudes and behaviour constitute respectfulness? Providing guidance on what the core values mean by use of examples would not be meant to

circumscribe the core principle of freedom of expression, but rather to ensure that all members feel free to express themselves in an environment free from unprofessional and disrespectful behaviour.

There is extant literature that suggests a key way to encourage or shape behaviour in organization is to tailor the reward systems to these behaviours. It is possible to give rewards based on pro-social behaviour modelled on the key values in the University motto. Appelbaum (2007) argues that the key factor in promoting prosocial behaviour is to create an atmosphere where individuals feel empowered to behave in ways that go beyond the normal expectations of civil behaviour. The university faculty, who have a great deal of autonomy in their work and who are generally seeking a collegial workplace, are likely to respond to any encouragement or recognition of prosocial behaviour. Thus, one recommendation is that there is visible recognition and acknowledgement of the value of prosocial behaviour among members of the Faculty Association. There are merit awards for exceptional teaching and research for members, an award for excellence in service can be used to encourage such exceptional behaviour. Thus, members who mentor students or junior faculty and those who promote respect and contribute to the creation of a positive and professional workplace, in their roles as academic, should be rewarded through some form of public recognition. Measuring or evaluating pro-social behaviour is inherently subjective, yet, there are methods that can be used to identify them. One suggestion would be for the recipient of the pro-social behaviour to nominate the individual or others who have witnessed such individuals to identify their positive contributions.

Communication Skills and the Dispute Resolution Officer

Communication and social interaction are the most basic actions in which we engage. Humans are by nature social beings and social interactions are fundamental for human survival.

Social dependence continues throughout our lives though it is possible to convince ourselves of our independence. Despite the central roles of communication and social interaction, however, they constitute a set of skills that many of us do not spend a great deal of time learning. Social interactions are messy. People cannot always read the intentions and desires of others. We can only infer them from what we see and hear. Sometimes, our behaviour, or that of others, has unintended consequences. Thus, we may intend for outcome A to happen but end up having outcome B occur (with or without A). There are concrete skills to be learned that can greatly improve how to communicate and understand each other.

The BC Justice Institute is one of the premier organizations that provide training in communication, mediation, negotiations, dealing with conflict and anger and other forms of social interactions that are useful to the vast majority of us. In 2008, the University and the Faculty Association took the initiative to create a position, the Dispute Resolution Officer (DRO), whose mandate is to address both proactively and reactively all forms of member-to-member conflict that are not defined as harassment based on the Human Rights Code nor official grievances under any article in the agreement. The ground that the DRO is asked to cover centres on interpersonal communication and miscommunication. Many of the consequences of miscommunication frequently manifest themselves as various forms of unprofessional behaviour.

The DRO is a member of the Faculty Association with particular professional training in interpersonal communication and conflict resolution. Workshops at the program level can assist programs to develop and/or strengthen respect and collegiality. Organizing sessions of a few hours in length as opposed to very long workshops might make it much easier for chairs or other members to attend. Further, tailoring workshops and sessions to particular issues that a program or members would like to work on would make such sessions much more useful. These may be general workshops on handling anger and dealing with diffusing difficult situations. Several survey

respondents noted their experiences with students or others who were angry about a particular situation. For those who may face such situations, having basic skills help in moving toward a more productive place.

Training and communication with members should occur from the initial days of employment as new members are orientated. Embedded in the orientation, could be brief instruction on the Faculty Association and the services it provides, as well as the roles of the various officer (i.e., DRO, H&DO, and G.O.) information on teaching strategies (particularly for junior faculty), and a discussion of the University motto and mission.

Such communication with members need not be a one time phenomenon. There can be annual sessions on teaching, communication, and conflict management aimed at programs and/or individual groups. The intention is to provide and reinforce communication skills that members can use.

Communication skills allow individuals to speak up in situations where they feel they are not treated in a professional manner or when they observe such behaviour occurring to others. Assertiveness training is one tool that should be part of everyone's communication tool box. It allows everyone, instigators and recipients, the opportunity to clearly communicate dissatisfaction. A key caveat is that assertiveness training needs to incorporate a component that clearly distinguishes the differences between assertiveness and aggression. The former is a power tool for those who feel powerless or disenfranchised. As Robert F. Kennedy noted, we are all able to change the world around us and "each time someone stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope." (PositiveMentality, 2008)

Forms of Redress and Support at Different Levels of the Organization

a) Peers

There is evidence in the literature that suggests that peers play an important role in providing support and advice for those experiencing unprofessional behaviour (Keashly and Harvey 2005). The results from the study suggest that individuals frequently turn to their peers and friends for advice and for support. The need for a strong support network for individuals facing conflict or unprofessional behaviour is confirmed in interviews I conducted with respondents and with key individuals who have experience in resolving conflict in the workplace.

One of the inhibitors to creating a strong social network in the workplace and outside is the lack of time individuals feel they have. A number of people noted that their workload and pace has increased in recent years leaving them 'too busy' to socialize with colleagues and other members of the University. Some respondents note that people do not take coffee breaks and tend to eat lunch at their desk to get their work done. The consequence is that when people need to turn to their peers for comfort or advice, the bonds between people are not as strong as they need to be. This is not to say that people do not socialize in and out of the university. They do. I believe the creation of strong interpersonal ties with peers is one important factor in developing a strong support network that could provide some benefit for individuals experiencing unprofessional behaviour at work. Further, as one professional in the field of interpersonal behaviour I consulted for this project noted, the more we know peers as whole people, not just as co-workers, the less apt we are to objectify them. Objectification is a process by which we are able to view a person as an 'object' or as uni-dimensional characteristics. Viewing someone else

as other and less 'human' increases the ease of treating them disrespectfully, uncivilly, and unprofessionally.

b) Chairs

The results suggest that chairs and supervisors can play a very positive role in assisting their members to address problems they are facing with unprofessional behaviour. Where policy exists, such as the Standard of Conduct, the chair (or supervisor) is the designated person to consult. If the problem falls under the criteria identified in the Standard of Conduct, then the chair can assist the member in addressing the matter. This policy, although formally introduced five years ago, has been rarely used. One reason that has been suggested by several individuals is that the behaviour threshold is much too high. Article 42B, notes that:

Persons covered by this Policy are expected to avoid creating, whether intentionally, recklessly, or negligently, circumstances which endanger the health, safety, or welfare of another person (3.1.2.)

Thus, the formal remedy does not address unprofessional behaviours that can potentially cause problems but do not "endanger" another person. It is unclear whether a change in wording of the article to allow disruptive behaviours that fall below the threshold of endangering an individual might help members address these issues.

In some cases, as noted above, the supervisor would like to help but the criterion is not met because the behaviour is not serious enough, or in some cases, the member does not wish to press formal charges fearing voicing their concerns through the formal process may create more problems. One comment that was made strongly in the survey is that members recognize the important role chairs can play in providing advice or acting in a manner that helped address the behaviour. A supportive chair can help resolve matters quickly as several respondents noted.

On the other hand, some view the chair as failing to act on a concern. Harlos (2001) described this situation as the 'deaf-ear syndrome' where an employee will go to the supervisor for assistance but none is forthcoming. It may be that chairs feel they do not have the skills or resources to assist members. One concern raised by several chairs is that they usually do not have any formal training in dealing with such interpersonal conflict and there is little instruction or advice given to chairs about their role or responsibility in this domain. The chairs I interviewed suggested that clear instructions regarding the responsibilities of their supervisory role are needed. Further, training and/or assistance in addressing interpersonal conflict would be advantageous. The University does offer courses for members on interpersonal communication and conflict resolution, but few chairs have a full day or two to devote to taking the courses offered. What may be useful is a standard training workshop focused directly on chairs' roles and strategies to address potential conflicts.

Members do sometimes feel that their chairs, in some cases, were the source of the unprofessional behaviour. Given the small number of respondents involved, it was not possible to explore more fully how members felt about the role of their chairs or supervisors. Suffice it to say, chairs and supervisors react to situations in ways ranging from supportive and positive to the opposite. Along these lines, there is growing recognition of the phenomenon of retaliation (Franke 2005). Retaliation in this context refers to actions taken by an individual, typically someone senior to the member, who makes a complaint of harassment, discrimination or uses voice in a manner that the supervisor disapproves of. Such incidents of retaliation are seen as one of more serious problems facing employers in recent years. There are many reasons why someone may retaliate. Franke (2005) summarizes:

The crux of retaliation is strong negative emotion. Managers do not appreciate being accused of discrimination. They may feel personally offended or professionally

threatened. The allegation may challenge their self-perceptions as caring and unbiased people. Those accused of committing employment discrimination may begin to feel that they are victims of an injustice. They may become angry, seek solace from others in the workplace, or attempt to marginalize the complainant (Franke, 2005: 2).

Franke further notes that “retaliation may soon surpass discrimination as the most severe employment problem in higher education.” One of the interesting facts that Franke reports is that it is much easier for plaintiffs to win a retaliation case than a case based on discrimination.

Although Franke looks at the American legal system, it is not a large stretch to imagine that such behaviours in Canadian universities can become serious as well. It is important for management from first line supervisors up to senior administration to create a positive and supportive environment for employees. Training in communication skills, conflict resolution, and leadership skills should be made available as should time to take the training. This training is something that the new position of Dispute Resolution Officer can address. Prior to the survey, the DRO was able to hold some workshops with chairs and several respondents of the survey noted that the DRO’s workshops were very useful.

c) Senior Administration

In the survey, respondents did not cite senior administrators as a common source of unprofessional behaviour. About 20% of the unprofessional behaviour seems to be attributed to senior administrators. Yet, in comments on the survey, members noted that one contributor to the increased stress and pressure in the workplace was the University restructuring process and the actions of senior administration in the process. One respondent sums up some of the feelings expressed by members:

“deliberate creation of a climate of uncertainty in the university by senior administrators...created a lot of stress among faculty and staff. Many employees felt that they were targeted implicitly by a secretive process”

Another described it as ‘being treated like a five year old’ where structural changes were imposed with little meaningful consultation that had significant impact on Members. A fairly common comment was the feeling that during the restructuring process, senior administration appeared to be acting in ways that seemed unprofessional. Some of the following comments give a sense of the feelings expressed. One respondent noted:

generally, I find the environment supportive and respectful, especially at the program level, where I feel I have full respect, support and recognition from the Chair. Any disrespectful behaviour has come from positions higher up.

Another was more direct about perceptions of senior administrators, stating “during the restructuring (ongoing) period I heard several stories of senior administrators behaving in a rude and unprofessional manner especially to staff members being unceremoniously dumped by the university.” It is impossible to separate the pressure stemming from the restructuring itself and from how the process was orchestrated. The clear message from the survey is that the structural changes and concerns about the change and its implication for the future of the university and of the faculty member’s future have contributed significant stress and uncertainty and some members expressed a sense that the manner in which the process was handled contributed to a difficult climate.

The larger concern is that a significant number of members perceive senior administrators as behaving in an unprofessional manner and/or not providing a clear message regarding professional behaviour. Members feel that there is not strong institutional support for those who are experiencing unprofessional behaviour. The following comment addresses this matter directly: “when the leaders of the organization engage in such (unprofessional) behaviour, it sets the tone

for how others should act. Such behaviour corrodes the spirit of cooperation and work environment at UNBC.”

It would not be helpful to paint a totally negative or unprofessional brush across the senior administration. Given that the university was undergoing a significant amount of structural change as this survey was being conducted, it is to be expected that individuals would reflect apprehension and concern. Yet, the literature on leadership strongly stresses the need for a strong and clear message regarding what kinds of behaviours are encouraged and/or tolerated. The senior administration, as leaders of the institution, contributes a great deal to the tone of the organization. Exemplary professionalism from the senior levels plays a large role in sending the message to the university community about professional behaviour.

Conclusion

In summary, the recommendations to address unprofessional behaviour can fall under two major headings: formal and informal approaches.

Formal Policies and Processes:

- Hiring policy focus on professionalism as criterion
- Standard of Conduct policy with lower threshold for unprofessional behaviour
- Accountability for behaviour during evaluations
- Recognition of pro-social (e.g., mentoring, supportive) behaviour

Informal Strategies

- Information sessions for new members
- Workshops for new chairs/administrators
- Communication workshops for members
- Assertiveness training (and how to distinguish assertiveness from aggression)
- Develop stronger social ties across the university community

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS

In this final chapter, I want to point out some of the project limitations, future directions to explore on this topic, and to sum up the findings and recommendations.

Project Limitations

This project was a first step in exploring behaviours that are difficult to observe, given that they are for the most part, relatively innocuous, but which in their totality result in very negative consequences. Prior to this study, the only information available was anecdotal and could easily be dismissed as not indicative of a pervasive problem. The present study has established that unprofessional behaviour is present and suggests it has been experienced by most of the members of the Faculty Association.

One key limitation of the project is that it did not encompass all members of the University. Administrative and support staff, directors, those in exempt categories, as well as students, are all part of the community and their voices need to be heard. Only with understanding the experiences of all members of the community can a full picture of the climate and culture be understood.

There were also limitations on the study because of the small size of the sample studied. It was not possible to focus on differences between different programs, and the impact of leadership and membership in different programs, on professional behaviour.

Another limitation is that the method employed focused on the perceptions of individuals regarding unprofessional behaviour. Such information is very important, but there are other ways to measure and view such behaviours including self-reports and observations and perhaps even conducting focus groups to have individuals with different experiences discuss the topic of unprofessional behaviour.

Future Research Directions

Having baseline measures, and conducting further research on the unprofessional experiences from all member groups of the university would be a next step in addressing the problem. The period in which this study took place followed major restructuring on the University and it is likely that the stress of change played a significant role in the responses from the survey. A more longitudinal approach would make it possible to look at such trends over time.

One very useful future study would be to focus on specific levels of observation such as the program level to evaluate how individuals in small groups interact. It is reasonable to assume that across the various programs there are different levels of collegiality and professional behaviour. By exploring the differences between very collegial groups and those with interpersonal conflict, we could better ascertain which qualities and factors may play a key role in developing more collegial environments.

Other possibilities for further research would be to conduct focus groups to address how to create an environment that is more respectful and civil environment and to conduct workshops and follow-up with members to see if the interventions are effective in improving the communication of members.

Summary

This project is informed by a growing literature of unprofessional behaviour in workplaces. It supports the claim that there is a problem that needs to be addressed at organizations such as UNBC. The focus of this project was on establishing baseline measures of the amount and types of unprofessional behaviours individuals experienced over a year. The consequences of such behaviour on individuals' health and productivity has been documented in other studies and these

results need to be considered when thinking about what most of us tend to view as minor or low-level problems in the workplace.

As was found in the survey, unprofessional behaviour is part of the interactions of individuals at the University. Most respondents experienced some level of unprofessional behaviour and almost half felt that unprofessional behaviour is a problem at the university. Simple remedies can make a difference in our lives and that of others, such as becoming aware of the impact of our actions on others, being conscious of how our words, body language and tone may be interpreted by others, and genuinely viewing colleagues, students and other members of the university community as individuals who are also experiencing the stresses and pressures of a changing work environment.

Proactive measures such as creating a code of ethics for faculty members can also help members focus on some key values to live by in their work. Scheduling workshops and sessions on communications, making these accessible to members, and encouraging members to participate through recognizing the workshops as part of professional training are also strategies that can make a difference in the overall climate.

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**“MY WORKPLACE INCLUDES RESPECT”
A SURVEY ON UNPROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOURS AT WORK
AS EXPERIENCED BY UNBC FA MEMBERS**

This project is conducted by Suzanne LeBlanc as part of the requirements for the MBA degree at UNBC. The results of the project will also be used by the Faculty Association to better understand the climate at UNBC and work toward creating a more respectful and professional workplace for all members. The project has received approval from the Research Ethics Board of UNBC.

MY WOKPLACE INCUDE RESPECT PROJECT

Dear member,

Every workplace has its share of behaviour that is counter to the creation and maintenance of a respectful and productive workplace. **Unprofessional Work Behaviour** is a concept that captures a range of negative behaviours in the workplace including rudeness, harassment, bullying, emotional abuse, and incivility that violate formal or informal norms of appropriate workplace behaviour. Unprofessional behaviour is one of a number of terms used to label violation of rules of respect and civility. Others terms include organizational mistreatment, counterproductive work behaviour, bullying, or psychological harassment to describe these matters.

Research on unprofessional interpersonal behaviour, in general, has found that few workplaces are free of negative behaviours, albeit, workplaces do vary in terms of the amount and intensity of different types of such behaviours. Further, studies have shown that high levels of unprofessional behaviour correlate with higher levels of stress and stress-related illnesses, disengagement, lower productivity, and lower levels of satisfaction with work.

The key goals of this project are: to understand the type and amount of unprofessional behaviour exists in your workplace; what strategies you may be employing to address these behaviours; and how successful you feel there are to address the impact of the behaviour. The information, collected in this survey, will provide the background data necessary to enable us for move towards making recommendations on strategies that will lead to a healthier workplace for all Members of the UNBC Faculty Association.

The **results** of this survey will be used in tabulated form. Some statements may be paraphrased, but all the information gathered will be anonymous and confidentiality is of prime importance on such a sensitive topic.

THE SURVEY SHOULD ONLY TAKE 10 TO 15 MINUTES TO FILL OUT.

WHEN COMPLETED, PLEASE RETURN THE SURVEY IN THE PRE-ADDRESSED ENVELOPES ENCLOSED IN THE PACKAGE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

INFORMATION SHEET ON INFORMED CONSENT

Thank you for taking time to assist me in this research project. This purpose of the project is to assess the types and amounts of unprofessional behaviour Faculty Association members experience and the efficacy of the current strategies for addressing these types of behaviours. Using the results of the survey and interviews, I will be in a position to make recommendations to be implemented in the future. The information gathered and the recommendations made can only benefit the climate of the University in the long run.

Although the aims of the project are to improve the work environment for FA members, the results will also be used as a MBA research project. I am completing my MBA degree from UNBC and am making use of the required project to address a real and pressing problem amongst the membership. The project has received approval by the President of the Faculty Association and the Provost of the University. Both are dedicated to achieving a healthy workplace. **Please note that even if you have not personally experienced unprofessional behaviour, I want to encourage you to fill out the questionnaire. As many of you understand, it is important to have as complete a data set as possible.**

There are no risk of being identified as your answers to the questions on the survey are confidential. Only I will have access to them during the project and Dr. Tallman will have access to the data in tables from after all the data are collected. The responses will be stored in a secure and locked file cabinet. When the defense of the project is complete all the responses will be shredded. This will be done by or on June 1, 2008. Again, participating in this project can only benefit the climate of the university in a positive manner in the long run.

It should be noted that the topic of this project can have strong emotional meaning for some of you. If you feel like you need to talk to someone about the subject matter, you are encouraged to do so. There are many resources available including the Wellness Centre at UNBC (wellness@unbc.ca) or 960-6369; the EAP toll-free line 1-800-663-1142. (You will be put in contact with a local professional within 24 hours. These professionals are required by law to maintain the strictest confidentiality). Another alternative is to contact the Crisis Centre for Northern British Columbia (24 hrs.) at (250) 563-1214.

The project I am doing is guided by my supervisor, Dr. Rick Tallman, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Business. If you have any concerns or comments, you are welcome to contact my supervisor at tallmanr@unbc.ca or 960-5404. You are welcome to contact me at 960-5816 or email me at leblanc@unbc.ca. If you should have any complaints or comments about this study, they should be directed to the Office of Research, UNBC, 960-5820.

INFORMATION SHEET ON INFORMED CONSENT

It is very important for me, my supervisor, and the University research ethics committee, that you are aware of the risks and rewards of this project, as well as your rights. I want to make certain that you are aware that this survey is part of a research study and that you understand how the data will be collected, stored and kept for a period of time. I want you to be aware that participating in this survey is voluntary and you have the right not to answer any questions.

Results of the survey will be made available in tabular form in a report to the Faculty Association by April 1, 2008. This report will be made available to the membership through a FA newsletter. The results of the larger study, including interviews, will be made available through a public defense of the project at UNBC during Spring 2008 that you are welcome to attend. I will send notice of the defense date on the UNBC Faculty Association membership email list when it is available. Copies of the project will be deposited at the UNBC library and will be made available to you in that format.

Before you begin, please ensure that you can answer yes to these questions:

Do you understand that you have been asked to be in a research study?	Yes	No
Have you read this research project information sheet?	Yes	No
Do you understand the benefits and risks involved in participating in this study?	Yes	No
Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study?	Yes	No
Do you understand that you are free to refuse to participate in or to withdraw From this study at any time? You do not have to give a reason. If you should choose to withdraw, you can opt not to return the survey.	Yes	No
Do you understand the issue of confidentiality and who will have access to the information you provide?	Yes	No
Do you understand that I have an obligation to report any illegal activities that could potentially harm you or others if disclosed to me?	Yes	No

Your consent is presumed by your filling out and returning the survey. You may keep this sheet for your records.

Question 1 Unprofessional Behaviour

Sometimes people experience rudeness and aggression in the workplace, either in person or in writing. How often are you aware of this happening to you? Place an X in the appropriate space to indicate the frequency over the past twelve months that (a) senior administrators, (b) first line supervisors, (c) peers, and/or (d) students made you the subject of the following behaviours

[illegible]

Question 1**(cont'd)**

***If you answered NEVER (0) in all the categories in question 1 please turn the page over and go to Question 3 below**

***If you answered that you experienced some form of unprofessional behaviour at least once please continue with question 2 below**

QUESTION 2**Your Experiences of Unprofessional Behaviour**

I would like to know a little more about some of your experiences of unprofessional behaviour. Thinking about the most important event you noted experiencing in question 1, please answer the questions below:

2a What was the event(s)? (please provide general details about the event(s); for example, what was the context? what occurred?)

--

2b. How did you address the event you noted in 2a ? If you did more than one of these, please indicate the order in which you did them with a number (e.g., mark a 1 as first, 2 as second).

Did	Order, if more than one	Ways to Address unprofessional behaviour
<input type="checkbox"/>		Filed a formal complaint (please indicate what type) _____
<input type="checkbox"/>		Did nothing _____
<input type="checkbox"/>		Discussed the matter directly with other party(ies) _____
<input type="checkbox"/>		Talked to a supervisor, chair, manager, and/or association representative _____
<input type="checkbox"/>		Requested mediation _____
<input type="checkbox"/>		Talked to peers about the event _____
<input type="checkbox"/>		Acted in kind back to the member (retaliated) _____
<input type="checkbox"/>		Assumed that either the person was having a bad day or that you had misinterpreted the situation _____
<input type="checkbox"/>		Other (please explain) _____

Question 2**(cont'd)**

2c. Do you think your response(s) above (2b) was/were effective in addressing this event?

☐ NO ☐ YES

2d. In the space below, please indicate, why you believe the process(es) you employed was/was not effective.

2e. In the space below, please indicate what you think might have helped you in this situation.

Question 3 Your general impressions of unprofessional behaviour

This section is to be answered by all respondents

In this question, I am interested in your impression of unprofessional behaviour as a whole in the university and/or your program or unit, rather than your own personal experiences discussed in the first two questions. This can include events you have witnessed and/or heard about.

3a. From your perspective, do you think that unprofessional behaviour is a problem at UNBC?

(Examples of unprofessional behaviour are found in question 1).

☐ YES ☐ NO

3b. From your perspective, do you think that there has been a change in such behaviour in the last year at UNBC?

☐ Increased ☐ About the same ☐ Decreased

Question 3**Cont'd**

- 3c. Please describe examples of the types of unprofessional behaviours you have witnessed. (In this question, I am referring to behaviour or words that you have witnessed rather than a personal experience of such behaviour). What category of individual was it with (e.g., chair, faculty, or student)? What was the context? What occurred?

QUESTION 4**ABOUT YOUR WORK**

This question is to be answered by all respondents

- 4a. Questions about your feelings about your institution and program or unit

Please respond using the following scale:

1 = Agree strongly	4 = Somewhat disagree
2 = Somewhat agree	5 = disagree strongly
3 = Neither agree nor disagree	

<i>The following questions ask you about how you feel about your institution:</i>	<i>please circle the appropriate number for each</i>				
The university climate is a collegial one (people in general want to help others where they can)	1	2	3	4	5
The university climate is respectful of individuals (values and acknowledges individuals)	1	2	3	4	5
I feel safe in expressing my concerns to my supervisor/chair (i.e., without fear of negative consequence)	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that the policies, processes, and procedures at UNBC promote a 'healthy climate' (free of psychological/physical harm)	1	2	3	4	5

QUESTION 4**CONT'D**

4b. Questions about your feelings about your program or unit. (Please use the 5 point scale in question 4a)	Please circle the appropriate number for each				
Members of my program/unit are collegial	1	2	3	4	5
Members of my program/unit are respectful	1	2	3	4	5
I feel safe expressing my ideas at program/unit meetings	1	2	3	4	5
I feel like part of the group in my program/unit	1	2	3	4	5

4c. If you approached your chair (or the administrator to whom you report) with a concern or request for help, in general she/he would. (please use the above 5 point scale)	Please circle the appropriate number for each				
Listen carefully to what you say and consider your view.	1	2	3	4	5
Make a real effort to understand difficulties employees may be having in their work.	1	2	3	4	5
Provide you with prompt feedback about any decision and its implications.	1	2	3	4	5
Treat you with kindness and consideration.	1	2	3	4	5
Show concern for your rights as an employee.	1	2	3	4	5
Do something to help address a concern or request you made	1	2	3	4	5

QUESTION 5: AWARENESS OF FORMAL POLICIES, & PROCEDURES

This question is to be answered by all respondents

5a. Are you familiar with the following policies	Yes, very	somewhat	No
UNBC's Harassment and Discrimination Policy			
The Standards of Conduct Policy			
UNBC emergency response to inappropriate, disruptive or threatening behaviour policy			
Safety regulations concerning working conditions UNBC			

5b. Are you familiar are with the duties of the....	Yes, very	somewhat	No
The Grievance Officer			
The Harassment Officer			
The Dispute Resolution Officer			

If you answered no to all questions in 5a and 5b please move to question 6

QUESTION 5:**CONT'D**

5c. **If you are familiar with any of the policies/articles and positions noted above, what, in your opinion, are the strengths and weaknesses of those you are familiar with in addressing unprofessional behaviour.**

QUESTION 6**JOB SATISFACTION**

This question is to be answered by all respondents

Please respond using the following scale:

(note this scale differs from the other scales used in the questions above)

1 = Very Satisfied	4 = Somewhat Dissatisfied
2 = Somewhat Satisfied	5 = Very Dissatisfied
3 = Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	

<i>How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following aspects of your job at UNBC if applicable?</i>	<i>Please circle the appropriate number</i>				
Support for my research	1	2	3	4	5
Recognition for my research	1	2	3	4	5
Support for my teaching	1	2	3	4	5
Recognition for my teaching	1	2	3	4	5
Support for my service	1	2	3	4	5
Recognition for my service	1	2	3	4	5
Recognition for my core work or professional responsibilities (for SLI & Librarians)	1	2	3	4	5
Support for my core work/professional responsibilities	1	2	3	4	5
My job overall	1	2	3	4	5
My job security	1	2	3	4	5

QUESTION7:**SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU**

This last set of questions is for descriptive purposes only. Summary statistics will be reported as aggregate data only. If you do not feel comfortable answering a question, please leave it blank and go on to the next item.

Gender: (check one)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Male
<input type="checkbox"/>	Female

<i>How many years, in total, have you worked at UNBC?</i>	
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Position

<input type="checkbox"/>	Assistant	<input type="checkbox"/>	Librarian
<input type="checkbox"/>	Associate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Senior Lab. Instructor
<input type="checkbox"/>	Full Professor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Instructor
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (<i>Please specify</i>)

Employment Status

<input type="checkbox"/>	Tenured/continuing
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tenure track or probationary
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contract with term limits

**THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMPLETE THIS SURVEY. YOUR INPUT
WILL HELP IN THE PROCESS OF CREATING A HEALTHIER WORKPLACE**

THANK YOU

INVITATION FOR A DISCUSSION OF UNPROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR

If you are interested in discussing the topics in this survey in more detail during a confidential interview, please contact me at leblanc@unbc.ca or through intercampus mail: Suzanne LeBlanc, MBA program, Department of Business.

If you prefer, you can detach this page and provide me with contact information (your email or phone number and name). The purpose of sending this interview request separately is to ensure your answers in the survey above are confidential and anonymous.

If you do decide to consent to an interview, the information you provide will be kept confidential. Only descriptions that cannot be traced to any individual(s) will be presented.

Yes, I would like to discuss unprofessional behaviour in more detail. Please contact me in the following manner:

Phone:

email:

Dear Faculty Association Member,

I am writing to invite your participation in what I believe is an important survey for you and for our colleagues at UNBC. This survey is being conducted for my MBA Project, a requirement of the MBA Program.

In a few days you will be receiving a package through intercampus mail. The package will include a survey on your experiences of unprofessional behaviour at the University in the past twelve months. By unprofessional behaviour, we mean any action or words that are uncivil, disrespectful, harassing, bullying, and aggressive.

There is a growing literature that indicates that such behaviours are prevalent in organizations of all types, including universities. Such behaviour often leads to stressful and disrespectful work climates.

Our goal is not to place blame, but to try to understand and to move forward in building a respectful work climate for every member at the University. An important first step in finding solutions is to collect an accurate audit of the types of behaviours that exist between members and the impact of such behaviours. Knowledge of such behaviours is a first step in finding solutions to move us to more respectful dialogue and treatment of our colleagues.

Whether you have personally experienced such behaviour or have witnessed it, **you can help us understand how to create a respectful workplace.**

Let me thank you in advance for taking part in this important project to help make your workplace and the university environment more positive. This project has been approved by the Research Ethics Board. Meanwhile, if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to email me at leblanc@unbc.ca

Sincerely,

Suzanne LeBlanc
UNBC, MBA student

MY WORKPLACE INCLUDES RESPECT

Last week I sent a survey to every Member of your Faculty Association. I realize how busy you are and if you have already completed and returned the questionnaire, please accept my sincere thanks for participating in the project.

Now that we are near the end of classes, if you have not had a chance to fill it out and send it, I would appreciate it if you did so. The survey is very and will take about 10 minutes of your time. **The response rate as of today is 17%.** As you know, the higher the response rate the more useful the data. **Every returned survey, including yours, is important.** Even if you have had no experience of unprofessional behaviour, it is important for me to factor that in to the results.

If you did not receive a survey, or if it was misplaced, please contact me at leblanc@unbc.ca or call 960-5816 to request a new survey and we will get one in the mail to you today.

Sincerely,

Suzanne LeBlanc