

NEGOTIATING NEWS #6

March 13, 2018

Welcome to Negotiating News # 6.

We met with the administration's bargaining team on March 5 and 6 and after more than six months the administration has finally shown faint signs of life. They responded to our proposals on the following Articles:

- Article 8: Procedures for the Promotion and Tenure Committee for Faculty Members;
- Article 9: The Assessment File for Non-decision Year Review, Extension of Tenure-track Appointment, Tenure and Promotion for Faculty Members;
- Article 10: Procedures for Promotion and Tenure Committees for Faculty Members;
- Article 11: Tenure-track Appointment and Tenure for Faculty Members;
- Article 12: Procedures and Criteria for Promotion of Faculty Members; and,
- Article 23: Term, Subsidized, Adjunct, Joint and Cross, Special Visiting and Spousal Appointments.

We can report that some progress has been made. For example, the administration has accepted language: in Article 9, that the full assessment file is sent to external assessors; in Article 10, providing Faculty Members the option to decline a fourth year review; and, language in Articles 11 and 12 that recognizes diverse career paths, traditions and values, ways of knowing and forms of communicating knowledge.

Nevertheless, most of the administration's responses to the proposals of our negotiating team are very troubling.

MUNFA's proposals are intended to support fairness and equity among our members and to provide greater security for those members who are most at risk. This extends beyond job security to include academic freedom and collegial governance as core elements of academia.

From the administration's response to our proposals in Article 23, it is apparent that **they want to run the university on the cheapest possible labour**, treat our colleagues as poorly as it can, and consign our colleagues to a teaching ghetto from which they can rarely escape. The administration wishes to **deny job security**, and **restrict the opportunity to access research funding** from our vulnerable colleagues – all the while depending on these colleagues to finance successive austerity budgets. The greater number of vulnerable, untenured colleagues who teach and work at a university, the weaker that institution's academic freedom and governance will become.

The administration's strategy, to restrict access to tenure stream positions and to establish post-tenure review, undermines tenure and, therefore, academic freedom at its essence. The vulnerability and precarious employment characteristic of sessional labour will increasingly become a feature of tenured faculty. MUNFA's analysis of data supplied by this administration show that, currently, over 40% of courses at

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MUN are taught by temporary, contractual faculty. This is already significant, and any increases will only further sabotage the value of tenure, and consolidates the corporate governance of the university.

Tenure provides the primary protection of academic freedom, the core value of university life. When academic freedom is undermined it is perilous to engage in the critical discourse that is essential to the academy. It is worth noting in this context that the administration's negotiating team struck the term "public intellectual" from our language describing the sorts of activity that count towards tenure. We need to be vigilant in the face of such corporate anti-intellectualism.

The MUNFA negotiations committee will continue to work on behalf of all of its members.

In solidarity,

MUNFA's Negotiating Committee:

- Jon Church (Chief Negotiator), Medicine
- Alison Coffin, MUNFA Executive Officer (non-voting)
- Dan Duda, Library
- George Jenner, Earth Sciences
- Kurt Korneski, History
- Leroy Murphy, Business
- Dave Peddle, Grenfell Campus
- Nathalie Pender, Grenfell Campus
- Nicole Power, Sociology
- Richard Rivkin, Ocean Science