

President's Update
State of Play

The MUNFA bargaining team remains committed attaining a fair deal at the table. Together we're fighting for:

Contract Academic Staff: These are our precariously employed colleagues on term appointments. Did you know there are instructors here among us who are making more money on strike pay than they do teaching a class at Memorial? That is unacceptable. Did you know there are term colleagues among us who live on serial short-term contracts for 5, 10, 20 years? Given their precarity, they have no real academic freedom, and no route to permanence. Contract faculty should have a viable pathway to secure employment. **Chronic precarity is the norm for contract academic staff even though administration has admitted to MUNFA under oath that budget lines exist for over 100 tenure-track positions that our employer has yet to fill.**

Post-retirement benefits: This is the employer's attempt to gut our post-retirement entitlement to health and dental benefits, by demanding future academic staff pay more, and work longer, to qualify for what we have now. And in doing so, split our union into those of us now, with good benefits, while future academic staff can only qualify for less. Even Glen Roberts, MUN's head of pensions and benefits, told MUNFA's bargaining team at the table that he did not understand this demand from administration, he did not know if it would save money, nor how much, and he reaffirmed that our benefits plan is robust and viable. It is important for us to remember that the only reason we have the benefits we currently do is because previous generations of faculty fought for and won them. **We owe the same commitment to equity and fairness to those who will come after us.**

Collegial governance: Memorial should be run on the principles of openness, transparency, intelligibility, and accountability. We are a public university, largely supported by money from you, the citizens of the province. The administration of this institution then are effectively stewards of the public purse. Here are just a few things at MUN that are not consistent with collegial governance:

- * Closed-door meetings of the Board of Regents are not collegial governance.
- * Meetings of the Vice-Presidents' Council, and the secretive Complement Advisory Committee, are not collegial governance.
- * Closed searches for academic administrators, combined with demands we agree to non-disclosure gag orders, and a short list already prepared by a private-sector executive search firms, are not collegial governance.

Imagine an administration so covetous of power, yet so insecure about their grip on it, that they refuse to include even as basic a definition of collegial governance in our collective agreement as this: " 'Collegial Governance' shall mean rights, privileges, and responsibilities of ASMs to fully participate in the University, including collegial processes as set out in Senate regulations,

guidelines, policies and decisions, and in institutional systems of peer-review and decision-making processes specified by this Collective Agreement, and in accordance with the Act."

Money: It's not all about the money, but money is important. According to Stats Canada, in 2020 we were 15% behind our comparator, comprehensive universities across Canada at all academic ranks. At the same time, we were 14th of 15 such universities in Canada when it came to wages. **If you care about the future of this institution, its ability to recruit and retain academic staff, you know then why this employer's offer of 12% is insufficient.** And doubly so when inflation, once insignificant, is now an issue for all.

Love from the Lines

How about that AMAZING rally we had this past Friday?!?! The energy was off the hook and we're carrying that energy onto the lines today!

There is so much positive and creative work happening out on the pickets:

Barmp counts! Are you keeping a tally? Run an impromptu study with your line. What's your line's "Barmp!" index?

Have you seen the strike and solidarity art? So much creativity happening in support of our cause. Check out the archives here: <https://munfastroike2023photos.wordpress.com/>