

**TO:** All MUNFA Members

**FROM:** The MUNFA Executive Committee

**DATE:** August 11, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Meeting Between MUNFA and Senior Administration - July 27, 2023

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On Thursday, July 27, members of the MUNFA Executive and members of MUNFA's staff met with President Bose and Provost Lokash. This is a summary of the discussion that transpired.

1. Student Wellness and Counseling Centre (SWCC)
  - a. MUNFA gave a full overview of the difficulties facing the SWCC's instability. In short summary, the SWCC's Doctoral Psychology Residency Program requires a minimum faculty complement to maintain accreditation. For a full explanation of issues facing the SWCC please [click here](#).
  - b. For an update on developments in the SWCC following this meeting [click here](#).
  - c. Concerns were further expressed regarding the use of a Complement Advisory Committee that is not publicly accessible and does not have ASM representation making crucial decisions about the work of our union members.
2. Contract Academic Staff Member Conditions
  - a. MUNFA expressed that conditions remain entirely insufficient for contract ASMs. Many contract faculty members across the university have been in a state of constant purgatory as those on short-term contracts continue to receive no guarantee of renewal despite some holding these roles for nearly a decade. Beyond general asks for improving conditions, it was emphasized that the stress and precarious nature of this needed to change. Contract ASMs do not have access to benefits between contracts adding additional stress to themselves and their families.
  - b. The new language in the Collective Agreement surrounding the conversion of Contract ASMs to permanent ASMs was discussed. It was asked why this conversion mechanism is not being utilized more often. The CA specifies that the Provost is the one to facilitate these conversions.
  - c. In response, the Provost shared that she would need a request from the Dean of the unit to process any conversions. The administration also expressed the financial difficulties they are facing given provincial funding cuts. They said that a permanent faculty position is a

25 year plus commitment and they do not have the assurance of long-term funding to make this possible.

- d. It was expressed how frustrating it is to hear that there is no money for permanent positions with the benefits and stability workers deserve when millions of dollars are put into programs facilitated by external corporations. It was further expressed how this response was insufficient given the tremendous detrimental impact left on people's quality of life and ability to do their jobs effectively. The responses given did not adequately address the stress and strain facing the folks left in precarious positions. MUNFA will continue to advocate for more.

### 3. The Relationship between the Memorial Administration and the Provincial Government

- a. The relationship between Memorial's Administration and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has raised several concerns for MUNFA. Having private conversations without public advocacy surrounding the lack of public funding is insufficient when the university is actively crumbling around us. Memorial needs an administration that is ready to advocate for the faculty, students, and staff within it.
- b. In response, President Bose expressed that the relationship is a delicate balance he is trying hard to maintain. He stated that at this time, he does not believe public advocacy against the Government would be in the best interest of the university. He stated that every part of Memorial has a role in its development and that the role of public advocacy from the student and staff unions is critical. He highlighted the wins achieved by the students and stated that his role was one that required more balance as the arrangement Memorial's administration currently has with its provincial government is atypical to those in other parts of Canada. He said that the constant communication he has is an important piece of the puzzle and his instincts say that he should be hesitant to abandon that.
- c. MUNFA disagreed and pushed for the administration to join the strong voices of the students, faculty, and staff for increased funding.

### 4. Search Processes

- a. MUNFA expressed that they were pleased to see the open nature of the search process for VP Grenfell and wanted a commitment that similar open processes would be done in the future.
- b. The President and the Provost assured that future search processes, from the dean level to the level of the upper administration, intend to follow this process. They emphasized that this was the tone of the current search committees and that the final decision rests with the search committee.
- c. MUNFA condemned the use of external Executive Search Firms. The President and the Provost shared that there were a few contracts that had already been signed prior to their discussions with MUNFA that were being carried out. Beyond this, there were no plans to use Executive Search Firms in the future and they were making a cognizant effort to encourage internal searches. Staff have been hired to do this work internally.

- d. It was asked if these parameters would also apply to the upcoming Presidential search. They stated that while technically every decision made for every search process is dictated by a committee, they did not see why the committee would choose differently from an open process for the President. They stated that an Executive Search Firm may be deemed necessary for the Presidential search by a committee due to not having the in-house staff with the necessary degree of separation.
  - e. It was strongly encouraged that alternative arrangements to an Executive Search Firm be offered for the Presidential Search and it was outlined that several faculty members have the experience of such searches and would be able to offer their expertise in this instance.
5. Course “Experience” Questionnaires
- a. MUNFA expressed concern with the resurgence of CEQs, noting the extensive research surrounding equity outcomes. While the Collective Agreement states that the outcomes of CEQs do not need to be included in promotional files, it is questionable that the university continues offering them despite promises of a move away from them. There were further concerns about the use of an external corporation, Blue by Explorance, to conduct these CEQs and the amount of money put into this arrangement.
  - b. The Provost shared that they would not know the success of the new CEQ rollout until it was completed.
  - c. MUNFA received a commitment that the administration would share the agreement signed with Blue by Explorance and the future intentions with the program.
6. Future Meetings
- a. MUNFA would like to encourage all members to send suggestions of topics and/or concerns they would like raised at future meetings with administration. These suggestions can be sent to [munfa@mun.ca](mailto:munfa@mun.ca).