

Negotiating News #6

MUNFA files for conciliation, attempts to move bargaining forward

June 17, 2022

On June 9, MUNFA's Executive Committee served the Minister Responsible for Labour with a letter requesting that MUNFA and the university's administration move to conciliation. Requesting a conciliator is the next step in the bargaining process — it is a standard development on the road to reaching a collective agreement, and the consequence of the University's attempts to delay discussion of important items. (See below for an illustration depicting the possible steps in the bargaining process.) Since delivering our notice to bargain in August of 2021, MUNFA and management have met on 15 days. We are pleased to tell members that we have made progress on some key issues, such as the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge and Elders in promotion and tenure processes, and improved language regarding equity, diversity, and anti-racism.

University administration appears uninterested in resolving several crucial issues for MUNFA members, and no significant headway has been made at the bargaining table on the matters of governance, collegiality, climate action, pay, and improved working conditions for ASMs — particularly those who are precariously employed. A priority for MUNFA is addressing workload and job security concerns through proposals that would guarantee a certain proportion of courses be taught by MUNFA members, and that a certain proportion of members be tenured/tenure-track. These are all urgently important, and the administration's refusal to make genuine movement on them is disconcerting to the Negotiating Committee.

Climate action should be at the top of the agenda for every institution in the world, and it is one to which our students are deeply committed; they will need to live with the decisions we make today for decades to come, and MUNFA has made it an essential aspect of our negotiations. Governance and collegiality are also long-standing issues at our university, and the time has come to resolve them and create a healthier, more productive work environment.

As MUNFA revealed in a recent negotiating update, our members are paid significantly less than their colleagues at universities that the administration has chosen to compare itself against. In fact, MUNFA members rank 14th out of 15 comparator universities. MUNFA members have not received an across-the-board pay increase since 2016, and inflation has been eating into members' salaries for more than half a decade.

MUNFA members have received a dramatic pay *cut* due to the university's inaction.

Your Negotiating Committee hopes that a satisfactory agreement can be reached with the assistance of a conciliator. If you would like to be more involved in the bargaining process, you can join the Contract Action Team or the Job Action Committee by emailing munfa@mun.ca.

In solidarity,

MUNFA's Negotiating Committee:

- Jon Church, Medicine (Co-Lead Negotiator)
- Nicole Power, Sociology (Co-Lead Negotiator)
- Dan Duda, QE II Library
- Patrick Gamsby, QE II Library
- John Hoben, Education
- Nathalie Pender, Grenfell Campus
- Janna Rosales, Engineering & Applied Science
- Ken Snelgrove, Engineering & Applied Science
- Erwin Warkentin, Modern Languages, Literatures, and Cultures
- Travis Perry, MUNFA Labour Relations Officer (non-voting member)
- Dale Humphries, MUNFA Labour Relations Coordinator (non-voting member)

