

Negotiating News #8

MUNFA tries to make headway at conciliation

September 14, 2022

On Sept. 8 and 9, your Negotiating Committee met with MUNL’s bargaining team as well as a provincially appointed conciliator to move negotiations forward on a fair deal for MUNFA members. As has been common throughout this process, the administration’s representatives were unprepared to discuss substantive issues of concern to MUNFA members, either through their own proposals or in response to MUNFA’s. This is more evidence of the administration’s unwillingness, lack of capacity, or inability to meet MUNFA as a bargaining equal. Nevertheless, progress was made on some issues.

Some of the key developments from Sept. 8 and 9:

- MUNL continues to push for “post-tenure review,” better understood as an end to tenure and thus a significant threat to job security and, more fundamentally, one of the key pillars of academic freedom. MUNFA continues to reject post-tenure review.
- The administration has made clear that it intends to seek change to future post-retirement benefits that will effectively create a two-tier system for members. This is unacceptable.
- MUNL rejected our proposal for additional course remissions to support MUNFA members carrying out equity work. The university consistently refuses to make monetary commitments to back up their self-avowed interest in equity and diversity.
- While MUNL has committed to collect equity data, as recommended by the Joint Gender Equity Salary Adjustment Committee, they have refused to include language in the Collective Agreement requiring them to provide this data to MUNFA.
- MUNL rejected proposals to increase salary on Assisted Educational Leave as well as the number of weeks for supplemental parental leave — these are issues not only of remuneration, but also of equity and security for members.
- The administration rejected MUNFA’s proposal to introduce a definition of collegial governance into the collective agreement, despite a demonstrable erosion of governance in recent years.
- On May 12, MUNFA tabled a proposal for a 15% wage increase over the course of the next contract, which MUNL has yet to respond to. Given that members have not received a raise since 2016, during which time inflation has cut into your wages by at least 18 per cent, it is difficult to see this salary request as anything other than reasonable on MUNFA’s part. Members at the conciliation update on Friday made it clear that they supported this proposal.

- Despite MUNFA tabling proposals on the key issues of workload, job security for contract faculty, and reversing the ongoing attrition of tenured and tenure-track faculty in February and March, the university's administration has failed to respond to any of these issues. They remain outstanding.

In an effort to make the negotiation process transparent for members, MUNFA held a conciliation update meeting open to all members on Sept. 9. Almost 100 members registered for this virtual event, and members who attended made clear that they support the Negotiating Committee's positions. There will be a similar meeting after the next conciliation dates, and all MUNFA members are encouraged to keep an eye out for that when it is announced. The next conciliation meeting dates have not yet been finalized.

If you would like to be more involved in the bargaining process, there are a number of actions you can take today:

1. Append [this email signature](#) to your emails to show support for the Negotiating Committee.
2. Sign on to [this letter](#) calling on the administration to make a fair deal for you and your coworkers. It will be presented to the administration once a majority of MUNFA members have signed.
3. Join the Contract Action Team to participate in organizing your fellow members. Meetings are held every Monday, 9:30-10:30 am, and are open to all MUNFA members — email membership.munfa@mun.ca.
4. To assist in logistics planning for any potential strike, join 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
- Travis Perry, MUNFA Labour Relations Officer (non-voting member)
- Dale Humphries, MUNFA Labour Relations Coordinator (non-voting member)