



Representing Faculty, Librarians & Veterinarians

NEGOTIATOR

August 11, 2014

Dear Member,

This letter is a further update regarding your negotiation team's progress toward the renewal of our Collective Agreement, which expired on [June 30](#).

Background: As we reported on Aug. 1, while negotiations over the summer yielded significant progress on most non-monetary issues, the two sides were very far apart on compensation proposals, including salary during Study/Research Leave. With a strike vote scheduled for July 9th and 10th, the management withdrew their disastrous proposals on job security. Given management's initiative, your UGFA Executive suspended the strike vote as a show of good faith and the two parties entered into mediation with Mr. Kevin Burkett on July 22nd. Disappointingly, little progress was made during the mediation process.

In an effort to try to eliminate the need for a strike vote altogether, at the beginning of August, your negotiation team formally requested that management agree to put the compensation issues to binding arbitration, using what is referred to as the "final-offer-selection" process. Final-offer-selection is a process whereby both parties put forth their positions to an arbitrator who then selects one of the two positions. We are sorry to report that management has rejected our request for binding arbitration. We are deeply disappointed by their decision, as this process would have imposed a solution on both parties, meaning that negotiations would now have been completed and the possibility of labour disruption completely averted.

So where do we go from here? Both sides have agreed to proceed to Conciliation, using an Ontario Ministry of Labour Conciliation Officer. We anticipate that conciliation meetings will take place on [September 10th](#) and [12th](#). Dr. Peter Simpson, Director of Dispute Resolution Services, will be acting as the Conciliator. (Dr. Simpson was the Conciliator during the recently successful conciliation process between Carleton University and its Academic Staff Association.) It is important to recognize that conciliation is a non-binding process, meaning that at any time either side has the right to walk away from the process and initiate a move towards a lockout or strike. The timing of such action could legally occur on the 17th day after the Minister of Labour mails a notice confirming that the conciliation process will not result in an agreement being reached, technically referred to as a "no-board" report. Although lockouts (where the employer prevents the employees from working and receiving pay) are uncommon, we need only look at the recent labour disruption at Guelph Transit as an example of an employer (the city) lockout.

As your negotiating team, we intend to make every reasonable effort to reach a satisfactory agreement that is consistent with the bargaining principles endorsed by the membership. This includes a compensation package that preserves the essential elements of the existing salary structure and is normative with respect to agreements that have been and are being ratified at other Ontario universities. However, recognizing that it is possible that the conciliation process may not result in an agreement and that the management refuses to enter into binding arbitration, which is by far the easiest way to solve the issues, we believe that we have no other choice but to proceed with the strike vote. As such, your UGFA executive has decided to reschedule this very important vote. No one wants a strike, but we strongly believe, and history

has shown us, that the best assurance of a positive outcome in conciliation is a strong show of support by way of a strong 'yes' vote. With a resounding 'yes' vote, you can show the management that you have confidence in your negotiating team.

The vote will be held at the regional campuses and the main campus on **Monday September 8th** and **on the main campus only** on Tuesday September 9th. Further details will follow soon.

As always, we welcome your comments and we thank you for your continued support.

UGFA Negotiation Team
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