

As the Fall 2022 semester begins, we wanted to give you an update on collective bargaining.

To date, your UGFA bargaining team has met “at the table” with the Administration for 11.5 hours. In addition, the team has met on its own for 75 hours.

At this point, the UGFA team has presented 25 proposals. As a reminder, proposals were developed and approved by the appropriate bargaining preparation subcommittee before being passed to the bargaining team for final approval. We have presented a number of proposals involving workload and academic freedom to the Administration, but the Administration has yet to respond.

1% of What?

During August, we had just one day of meetings where we sought clarification on a proposal from the Administration and where we discussed how we move forward on the financial bargaining given the constraints of Bill 124. A number of members have written notes to the UGFA about inflation and salary increases, but the disappointing response is that under Bill 124 we face two more years with a maximum cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) of 1%, as well as our existing annual career increment and merit pay, and our “total compensation” increase faces the same cap. So, the discussions mentioned earlier are about the two parties having a common understanding of what constitutes “total compensation” and how the legislation works. To that end, the UGFA has consulted several times with our lawyers and, through OCUFA, we also have an understanding of how similar discussions have played out at other institutions, where the Administration and Faculty Association have agreed to provide the maximum allowed increases. Given the notes from UGFA members, it is worth mentioning that bargaining units in the province that have completed their Bill 124 requirements have recently bargained a 2-3% COLA.

General Meeting

Tuesday Sept. 13,
2022

3:00 p.m.

A Zoom invitation
will be sent shortly
to all UGFA
Members

Issues Emerging

In our Bill 124 discussions, the Administration has referred to how they have handled the legislation in bargaining with other unions, and they have talked about “total compensation” in the context of what they include in their budget model. Of course, what they have done with other unions is irrelevant to us, and, as our lawyers affirmed, their budget model is also irrelevant to Bill 124 discussions.

As you know, UGFA Unit 1 represents faculty, librarians, and veterinarians; our collective agreement table of contents section headings reflect that there are parallel and roughly equivalent processes for members when it comes to certain key items. Maximizing equality of treatment of members is a core principle for the UGFA. The Administration has suggested that veterinarians no longer need peer review — the boss can just write an assessment — with one of the clearly disingenuous rationales being that the change would reduce workload for members. Replacing peer review with an evaluation by the Administration is an unacceptable affront to the principle of collegial governance.

UGFA Bargaining Team

Herb Kunze, Chief Negotiator
Bill Cormack
Mary DeCoste
Jon Ferris
Steve Gismondi,
Andrew Hathaway
Susan Hubers
Pavneesh Madan
Kirsten Sanderson

Stay Tuned

As the summer ends, our calendars have many September meetings booked. Our experience suggests that things will move quickly, and any impasses will crystalize. We will be holding a General Meeting on Tuesday, September 13 at 3:00 p.m. Details will be provided shortly.

Thank you for your support.

As always, please email facassoc@uoguelph.ca if you have any questions.