



Bargaining Update #1

May 26, 2014

This Bargaining Communiqué marks the first of a regular series of emails that will update CUASA members on the status of the current round of contract negotiations between the union and the employer, Carleton University. Please take a few moments to review the information contained below. In addition, during negotiations we expect a number of CUASA Information Sessions that will address concerns and answer your questions.

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1. Your Bargaining Team

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2. Bargaining Priorities

Your Bargaining Team is committed to securing a fair deal at the bargaining table, one that addresses issues highlighted by CUASA members in the recent Bargaining Survey and discussions with CUASA Council.

Tenure and Promotion remains a top priority. We will fight for enforceable language on unit standards as there are still unresolved issues over the interpretation of parts of Article 10. It should be noted that there is still an outstanding grievance on the unit standards approval process with respect to six units on campus and another such grievance now before an arbitrator.

Improvements to the terms and conditions of employment such as salaries, benefits and workload (caps) are also key items in this round of negotiations.

Other priorities are related to grievance issues/processes, clarification of language spurred by member questions and language to strengthen privacy and intellectual property.

As the bargaining process moves forward, further details on the specifics of both CUASA's and the Employer's proposals will be made available on the CUASA Bargaining Page (www.cuasa.ca/bargaining). Regular updates will be available via regular communiqués and through CUASA Information Sessions to be announced as required, as per the usual and customary practice.

3. Bargaining Process Overview & Upcoming Dates

Collective bargaining is an elaborate process between two distinct and opposing groups. On the one side, you have the Employer (the University) who must meet financial and organizational objectives. On the other hand, CUASA, by legislation, must protect not only the economic welfare of all its members, but it must ensure that members are treated fairly, paid equitably, work in a safe environment, and are protected by basic rights such as academic freedom, job security (tenure), advancement (promotion), etc.

Your current Collective Agreement expired on April 30th, 2014, and your Bargaining Team has begun the process of negotiating a new deal with Carleton University. This process can take several months and will consume much of the Summer and part of the Fall term.

Over the next several weeks we will bargain in a fair and thorough fashion without giving in needlessly. It is the aim of your Bargaining Team to secure a fair contract that addresses the concerns of CUASA members.

Bargaining is governed by protocols that are mutually agreed upon and cover confidentiality and communication, presentations from individuals on specialized topics (eg. benefits) and procedural issues re: note-taking and exchange of proposals. At the table each side is represented by their Chief negotiator and each is assisted by their respective teams. Proposals are exchanged, discussed, accepted, or dropped, but ultimately when there is mutual agreement on language governing some proposal it is said to be “pinked” (or accepted by both sides). The completion of the bargaining process results in the development of a new Collective Agreement governing a certain period of employment. It needs to be approved by both sides according to predetermined rules governing such agreements.

Currently there are only two dates set for meetings with the employer. On Thursday, May 22nd the two Bargaining Teams met face to face for the first time for a Meet and Greet. Bargaining dates in the weeks ahead and right into August were determined tentatively at this time. The first day of actual bargaining is scheduled for Friday, June 6.

4. Discussions at the Negotiating Table

The Bargaining Team is committed to exploring all proposals brought to the table through question and discussion. This is a process that was a large part of the last round of negotiation and it will continue to govern the exchanges this round.

Please note that while your Bargaining Team has a mandate to negotiate on your behalf, they will ultimately bring back to the CUASA membership a proposed contract for members to accept or reject via a ratification vote.

5. How CUASA Members Can Stay Informed

There will be considerable information to be shared and debated in the coming weeks. In addition to reading all bargaining-related communiqués, CUASA members can ensure they are informed about the status of negotiations by regularly visiting www.cuasa.ca/bargaining. This page will be updated regularly following the first bargaining meeting on May 23rd.

Additionally, members comfortable with social media can receive updates via [@CUASA](#) on Twitter and [CUASAOnline](#) on Facebook.

6. Spotlight: A Forensic Audit of Carleton's Finances

CUASA Council voted in favor of and is currently exploring hiring a consultant to do a forensic audit of Carleton University's financial statements in preparation for bargaining with the employer. While the general financial climate might be challenging we believe that Carleton has done well financially over the past years. Their financial position was described as healthy to the previous CUASA bargaining team in the 2012 negotiations.

As reported by OCUFA, the Brock University Faculty Association has formed a committee of members who have dissected the university's financial statements before going into bargaining. The members were volunteers from the accounting unit at Brock. OCUFA also noted that a similar process had taken place at the University of Western Ontario Faculty Association (UWOFA).

CUASA would also encourage members who have skills in forensic auditing to contact us and volunteer to assist in this regard. We thank you for your support.