



Faculty Bargaining Across the Province: Bargaining Communique #2

July 15, 2014

Much like CUASA, faculty associations across the province are in the process of negotiating or ratifying new collective agreements with their respective employers. This Communiqué contains details on the bargaining situation at several Ontario campuses, with the aim of putting our own negotiations in a wider context.

New Contracts

Within the last few months, several faculty associations have ratified new collective agreements or are in the process of doing so.

The **Algoma University Faculty Association's** ratification process for a collective agreement for part-time faculty, their first, is finally underway. But it wasn't an easy round of bargaining: after nearly a year of talks, the Association's members voted 85% in favor of strike in January, and filed for conciliation on Feb. 7th. The employer filed for a No Board report in early May, threatening the possibility of a lockout. Despite these obstacles, it seems likely a deal will be ratified in the very near future.

Similarly, at **Brescia University College**, first contract talks for faculty began in August 2011, with an agreement finally ratified in early 2014. The Ontario Council of University Faculty Associations reports the settlement, which runs from July 1st, 2011 to June 30th, 2016, includes salary increases of zero percent the first two years, a two per cent lump sum increase (not added to base), and a 0.5% increase to base and employer pension contribution in 2013-14, and two per cent and 2.5 per cent increases to base in the final two years.

The **Trent University Faculty Association (TUFA)** recently ratified a new agreement, which saw improvements to the benefits plan and the professional expense fund, as well as improved language around parity-based raises. Crucially, TUFA successfully fought off attempts by the employer to create new teaching-only positions.

Ongoing Bargaining

At Brock, after a request from the **Brock University Faculty Association**, the employer has agreed to a provincially assisted mediation process, scheduled to begin August 6th, 2014. Bargaining began in May, with the employer proposing changes to 47 of the 49 articles in the collective agreement. Salary and other monetary issues have not been discussed yet. Brock University laid off more than 100 staff in 2013, and BUFA is very concerned the employer plans further cuts.

As many CUASA members are aware, bargaining at the University of Windsor has been particularly tough. Despite ongoing talks with the **Windsor University Faculty Association (WUFA)**, the employer requested a No Board report, putting them in a position to lockout faculty on July 3rd. While the employer backed down from its planned lockout, the President of the University of Windsor sent an email to all WUFA members threatening the cessation of pension payments, benefits, the grievance and arbitration process, and the collection of union dues unless a deal was reached by July 7th. This aggressive tactic was met with

considerable backlash from across the province, which forced the employer to back down. Negotiations are scheduled to continue in July and August, with the assistance of a mediator. WUFA has not held a strike vote and has no plans to hold one in the near future.

At 10pm on July 7th, less than 48 hours before members were set to cast ballots, the

University of Guelph Faculty Association postponed their planned strike vote. The days leading up to the strike vote saw significant movement at the bargaining table. No settlement has yet been reached, but the bargaining team is optimistic a deal is within reach. UGFA has been in bargaining with the employer since April 3rd, 2014.

At the University of Western Ontario, talks have been suspended for the summer break. Bargaining has been ongoing since May, with UOWFA describing them as collegial.

Further Information

The **Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA)** is an invaluable resource for details about the bargaining situation on campuses across the province. You can find their website at www.ocufa.on.ca.