

May 2009

Bargaining Update

As you may recall, we had divided our bargaining issues into four blocks: working conditions, appointment & seniority, benefits and compensation. In addition, there were a number of framework provisions to be negotiated ranging from academic freedom to strikes and lock-outs. When we last updated you, we had finished up working conditions and had been bargaining about appointment and seniority as well as framework language for some time. We had not yet dealt with benefits and compensation.

Since the last update in December, we have been at the table 14 times, though not all of those days involved the usual bargaining team. More about that below. We have 9 bargaining sessions scheduled for May and the hope on both sides is that those dates will be sufficient to conclude bargaining. Substantially all proposals are on the table and your team has been diligent in responding to administration proposals. At this point, the ball is entirely in the administration court.

We have concluded almost all framework articles, have narrowed the issues in appointment and seniority to a handful and have put benefits and compensation on the table. The administration team has indicated that they will respond to benefits and compensation in one block, and they have been slow to develop an understanding of their own fiscal situation, but the budget is due on May 15 and that should bring some clarity.

On a number of occasions, we met as a joint bargaining table of contract academics and full-time faculty with representatives for both bargaining units to resolve some issues relating to the integration of the two agreements as well as issues related to graduate students. These discussions have yet to conclude.

Since it is possible that a tentative agreement will be reached in the not too distant future, it is very important that you let the office know your summer contact information so that we can keep you in the loop. If you know of colleagues who are not here today, please pass on this request. We will also send it out by email, but that may not reach everyone.

In solidarity,

Wendy Bourque, Stephen Dutcher, John Neilson and Jula Hughes