

Bargaining Update **August 10, 2021**

The faculty bargaining team met with the employer today, for the first time after tabling nearly all of our proposals last week. We hope to be able to finish presenting our monetary proposals this week, but are still awaiting full financial disclosure from the College Employer Council (CEC), to confirm and finalize our information.

On August 4, we submitted a proposal updating the Counsellor class definition, to clarify and reflect counsellors' current duties at the colleges. The CEC team began this morning by presenting their response to our proposal (see attached). We are reviewing the CEC's response in detail, but already note that they propose to strictly limit the work of counsellors to mental health issues, and appear to want to expand managers' ability to assign counsellor work to non-faculty. Their proposals also indicate a discomfort with spelling out in detail the work that counsellors do, which is a serious issue that counsellors have told us needs to be addressed this round. We will be consulting with counsellors directly to get their feedback on this employer proposal.

In addition, the CEC has indicated that they will not be tabling their concrete proposals as a full package. Our hope would have been for each side to table their detailed language early in the process (as is typical in negotiations), so that we can identify common ground as well as areas where we diverge, as a foundation to begin discussions in earnest. We felt that this would have been the best way for both parties to engage in sincere negotiations, where both sides are candid and forthcoming about their initial positions.

Today concluded with the CEC team presenting us with an exhaustive list of questions related to our proposals around equity. These questions centred almost entirely on challenges to whether there is data specific to the Ontario college system that backs up our members' lived experiences of bullying, harassment, discrimination, and racism. We will provide further information after we've had a chance to review and discuss the CEC's questions in more depth.

Our goal is to negotiate a settlement by September 30. Our team initially offered 35 dates to the CEC to further that goal. We have 11 dates remaining, with the vast majority scheduled for September. We know that this gives us the time we need to engage in rich discussion and debate, and to come to a resolution—but only if the CEC adheres to their stated goal of bargaining in good faith, by tabling concrete proposals that would allow sincere negotiating to begin.