

Bargaining Update – Oct 28, 2021

It is with great disappointment and frustration that we report to you that mediation has failed. Attached is the final report of the mediator, along with the offer of settlement we tabled during mediation.

We absolutely disagree with the finding of the mediator's report, most of which paints the faculty bargaining team as recalcitrant and unreasonable, as well as unwilling to negotiate realistic changes to our Collective Agreement. As you will see in the offer of settlement, your faculty team focused our demands on workload, partial-load working conditions, equity, Indigenization, and intellectual property rights; in other words, the top demands of faculty. We stripped our initial proposals down to their bare bones in order to try and start a dialogue with the CEC team. We responded to their questions, provided research, incorporated their language and structures into our revised proposals. We were repeatedly told by the CEC team that their offer of settlement was the only path to a negotiated agreement.

While Mediator Keller was suggested by our bargaining agent, OPSEU, and we did consent, as a team we have great concern with the way in which the process of mediation unfolded. In particular, we believe Mediator Keller's conclusions about the proposals were arrived at on the basis of very little direct communication with the faculty bargaining team, and even less understanding of the process by which the faculty team arrived at its proposals, nor the urgent needs of our members that they attempt to address.

Realistically, Mediator Keller's position reflects that of the CEC and is a classic approach to collective bargaining: that the only changes possible in any round of negotiations are minor and few in number. Our team's approach to bargaining is that attempting to negotiate greater changes is possible and necessary. It is our opinion that it is realistic and appropriate to bargain for all work to be paid work; for partial-load faculty to have that work recognized and appropriately compensated; that evaluation and preparation factors that have not changed in 30+ years need to be adjusted; that mode of delivery affects faculty workload; and that Counsellors, Librarians, Indigenous faculty and faculty from equity-seeking groups deserve fair working conditions now.

We also know that faculty having intellectual property rights has NOT prevented innovation or research in the university sector, and would not do so here.

We also know that the CEC's offer of settlement is not enough for faculty, nor will it prevent the ongoing and accelerating erosion of full-time faculty work in the colleges.

We invite you to read our offer of settlement, along with the mediator's report, and will set up time to consult with the Local Presidents and Bargaining Advisory Committee as soon as possible. We also promise to continue to bargain and fight for the improvements you need and deserve.

In solidarity,
JP, Jonathan, Katie, Michelle, Ravi, Rebecca, and Shawn