

April 21, 2016

Bargaining Update: Admin Rejects UMFA Proposals: Fast-track bargaining ends

To All Members of the Bargaining Unit:

The bargaining team met with the Employer twice this week – on Monday, April 18 and Wednesday, April 20 – and discussed UMFA’s responses to the central administration’s one-year, time-limited offer. Those responses included a monetary offer that would have seen improvements for all Members, and four issues of University governance that could not be left unaddressed, even in the short term.

While the administration was interested in some aspects of our monetary proposals, they rejected the majority of what UMFA put forward.

In response, the bargaining team proposed that for one year the administration:

- initiate a “freeze” on the use and development of performance indicators;
- keep teaching loads as they currently are; and
- guarantee the job security of instructors and librarians.

UMFA maintained its proposal that the administration should exercise its management rights in a way that is fair, reasonable, and equitable.

No agreement could be reached on performance indicators, teaching load, and the fair, reasonable, and equitable exercise of management rights.

The Employer is not willing to improve its monetary offer, maintaining their position that a market adjustment be given to only some, not all, UMFA Members. The Employer’s salary proposal means that some UMFA Members will have gone through two rounds of bargaining without a substantial salary increase, and will see their salaries eroded through inflation.

The Employer declined to make meaningful compromises at the table. Therefore, the expedited bargaining process has broken down.

UMFA and the administration will meet again in the near future to discuss UMFA’s full set of bargaining proposals discussed by the Membership at the Special General Meeting of March 31.

UMFA’s “freeze” counter-proposal	Central administration’s response
GOVERNANCE:	
Management Rights – that the administration exercise its rights in a manner that is fair, reasonable and equitable.	Rejected
Teaching Load – that teaching loads will not be greater than those in effect as of March 31, 2016 and that teaching assignments on load are to occur during fall and winter terms only, unless the Member consents.	Rejected

Performance Indicators – that performance indicators not be used, nor developed for use, at either the unit or individual levels.	Rejected
For Librarians and Instructors – Commit to guaranteeing the job security of Instructors and Librarians in a letter of understanding (LOU).	Prepared to offer a freeze in the layoff of instructors and librarians for either academic or financial reasons for one year (until March 31, 2017), with no expectation that the LOU would be renewed or be extended past the one year.
FINANCIAL:	
Market adjustment of \$1,500 to the base salary of each Member as of March 31, 2016	Rejected. Admin prefer to selectively raise salaries at Assistant and Associate levels.
Scale increase of 1.5% to base salaries for each Member, following the application of the market adjustment of \$1,500. Effective April 1, 2016.	Base Salary Increase of 1.5% (no change from last position).
Guarantee minimum of six increments for Members at the Assistant and Associate professor rank regardless of starting salary. Salary maxima will not apply to these increments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All professors be entitled to a minimum of 6 increments across their appointments of assistant and associate professor • The increments will be awarded so long as the professor has not exceeded the maximum of the assistant professor rank by more than \$25,000, or the associate professor by \$19,000.

The Importance of the Collective Bargaining Process

You may have recently heard a lot from the administration about an alternate approach to bargaining called interest based bargaining (IBB). This is a management technique developed in the 1980s, and almost no faculty association in Canada uses it.

Interest based bargaining works by having bargaining teams discuss only “shared interests” and develop informal agreements to satisfy those interests. Not only does this approach fail to acknowledge that interests can greatly diverge, but: UMFA would have been expected to forego talking to Members about what they would like to see in an improved collective agreement, and go to the bargaining table with no proposals.

Existing processes work because Members are a big part of them. We arrive at our bargaining proposals through listening, talking, and voting: we’ve conducted a lengthy survey to gather your input, and followed it with many face-to-face meetings in various faculties. We also do a lot of research, and spend a great deal of time making sure we have well crafted, reasonable, and defensible proposals to present to the administration. Responsible collective bargaining requires this approach.

At the Special General Meeting on March 31 Members discussed what our proposals would be, and voted on a package to be taken to the administration. Turning to Interest Based Bargaining would undermine democratic structures like these, which are in place to ensure your input and involvement.

How to get involved

- Call a constituency meeting: If you haven’t already had a constituency meeting to discuss bargaining with your colleagues, call the UMFA office and we’ll help you organize one.
- If you don’t have a representative on UMFA’s Board of Representatives, contact the UMFA office for more information – nominations are now open.

Meanwhile, if you have any questions or concerns about bargaining or other matters, please contact the UMFA office at (204) 474-8272 or FAUM@UMFA.ca.

Sincerely,
Mark Hudson
President