

UMFA Calls off Strike, Prepares for Fight for Future of Post-Secondary Education

For Immediate Release

Winnipeg, November 20, 2020 - The University of Manitoba Faculty Association (UMFA) has narrowly voted in favour of ratification, with less than 55% of voting members accepting the University administration's final offer.

UMFA members have called off strike action by the smallest margin in the context of the escalating COVID-19 crisis. The agreement includes a modest one-time payment for extra work done during the pandemic, but does not address the unlawful acts of the Pallister government to suppress wages under the now unconstitutional Public Services Sustainability Act.

Members who supported the ratification, as well as those who opposed it, shared the sentiment that UMFA members deserve better. Members agreed that urgent political action is necessary to ensure investment in higher education and the public sectors, as well as to end government intervention in the governance of the University.

"UMFA's professors, instructors, librarians, and archivists have expressed widespread anger at the University president, Michael Bennaroch, as well as the Pallister government, and know they deserve better," said UMFA President Michael Shaw.

The Pallister government's attacks on post-secondary education come amidst continued scandal and widespread failure to effectively respond to the COVID-19 crisis. The government's attacks on wages and work conditions on campus are not unique among public sector workers. Healthcare workers, K-12 teachers, bus drivers, and other public sector workers face similar shameful under-resourcing, despite increased need, workload, and risk.

"UMFA will continue to fight for post-secondary education and for investment in public services in the months that come," Shaw said.

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