

University of Manitoba Faculty Association members vote overwhelmingly to defend public education, authorize strike action

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Winnipeg MB - Members of the University of Manitoba Faculty Association (UMFA) have voted to authorize a strike as they call for fair and reasonable compensation from the University administration. With a record-setting voter turnout, 85% of voting members approved a call to strike. The improvements requested by UMFA will mitigate recruitment and retention issues that affect the quality of education for students at the University of Manitoba.

“Today’s results demonstrate that UMFA members will no longer accept being undervalued by their employer,” said Orvie Dingwall, UMFA President. “Professors, instructors, and librarians at Manitoba’s largest university deserve competitive compensation on par with their colleagues across the country.”

Recruitment and retention issues continue at the University as the administration has imposed government-mandated wage freezes and below-inflation increases, which have contributed to employees leaving the university and candidates rejecting offers of employment. It has also kept the University of Manitoba in the second lowest rank among the 15 research-based Canadian universities in terms of average compensation for faculty.

The University of Manitoba President, Dr. Michael Bennaroch, has publicly acknowledged in the University Senate that UMFA compensation has fallen behind 8% based on inflation alone. Yet the President has not publicly advocated for UMFA members and continues to follow a government-imposed wage mandate at the bargaining table.

“While tonight’s result does not mean that a strike will be called, it is clear that negotiations cannot continue until the administration pushes back against a government that continues to intrude in the bargaining process,” said Dingwall. “It seems this administration is unwilling to recognize the contributions of our members to the future of Manitoba. We call on the administration to protect the autonomy of the university and provide stability for students.”

UMFA represents over 1,200 professors, instructors and librarians at the University of Manitoba.