

SMUFU NEGOTIATIONS REPORT #2

Since Update #1 we met with the Employer's negotiating team on August 15, 22, 27, 28 and 29. We had hoped that we could report positive results, but that is not the case for the most part. We continued to make minor housekeeping changes at a glacial pace. For example, letters of appointment to part-time faculty will now be signed by the Vice-President Academic and Research. It took the better part of four sessions before we reached agreement on this change. No further meetings have been scheduled. We are ready to meet with the Employer at any time.

What We Have Achieved

There are two significant changes that we have accomplished so far. The university adamantly refused to consider a reduction in teaching load to 2-2. However, we did achieve a reduction that will affect some people and potentially all who apply for external funding. Faculty who apply for external funding from an approved agency will automatically receive a course reduction should their application be successful; no longer will course reductions be granted by a FGSR Committee deciding if you should get the release.

The second area where we were successful was with respect to leave provisions. We were able to bring the Pregnancy and Parental Leave clause in alignment with the recent Federal legislation that allows for a total of 61 weeks that may be split between the parents. The EI benefits will be supplemented to 95% of salary for the first 26 weeks of pregnancy and parental leaves; there will be a supplemental top up for those who want to stretch the parental leave to 61 weeks.

The Federal government also enacted a Family Caregiver Benefit that allow up to 35 weeks of leave to take care a sick family member (child or adult) paid for through EI. For some reason, the Employer would not countenance the term "family caregiver" going into the Collective Agreement. We were able to negotiate a clause under "Emergency Leave" that will allow a leave for family caregiving, which is funded through EI. The Employer would not consider supplemental benefits for this type of leave, or even listing the URL coordinates of the Act.

Health Care for Retirees

The Employer would not consider any health benefits for Retirees. Among several options, we had proposed that the contribution of the Employer to the Health-Wellness Benefits Trust be increased from 2.7% to 3.0%; the additional money would be used to offer Retirees health benefits by the Trust. The additional cost to the Employer would be \$90,000 a year. Consider that in the past year the University spent \$450,000, exclusive of the costs of trips to Toronto to challenge the ruling that a football player was ineligible. Evidently, the health of all retirees is less of a concern than the eligibility of one football player.

Money Issues

The Employer presented a totally inadequate monetary settlement. Their offer is as follows:

- Faculty Salaries – increase by 1% in each of three years,
- Lecturer Stream Salaries – increase by 1% in each of three years,
- Librarian salaries – First a market adjustment that would still keep the Librarian scales lower than other Atlantic universities and then 1% in each of three years,
- Honorarium for Chairs and Program Coordinators – increase of 0.75% in each of three years,
- Honorarium for Library Coordinators – 0% increase in each of three years,
- Professional Expense Reimbursement - increase of 0.75% in each of three years,
- Travel Expense Fund – 0% increase in each of three years,
- Moving Expenses for New Hires – 0% increase in each of three years,
- Stipends for thesis supervision – 0% increase in each of three years,
- Vacation Days for Librarians – no change in number of days that currently is the lowest in Atlantic Canada.

Other Issues

The Employer also refused to consider changes in the workload for Lecture Stream Faculty or to provide Program Coordinator with an administrative leave.

SMUFU and the Employer had agreed to try and resolve an outstanding grievance at the negotiating table. The issue is that the Employer issued 8 month contracts instead of 9 months to limited term hires after SMUFU won its case that the Employer had to pay vacation pay to contract faculty in accordance with the Labour Standards Act. The final proposal tabled by the Employer would have opened the contracts to less than 8 months.

SMUFU requested to BUY one additional course release to be used by members of the Executive, The Employer refused.

What Now

We have gone about as far as we can go at the table without a show of support from the membership. The Executive is considering a range of options that we might take.

As a first step, the SMUFU Executive is calling for a Special Meeting with the SMUFU membership on **Friday, September 14, 2018 from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. – Location - SB255.**