

NUFA MAY 2015

BULLETIN

FASBU BARGAINING BULLETIN

GETTING THE NUMBERS RIGHT

After meeting with the Employer on Thursday, May 7th the Collective Bargaining Committee continues to request and analyze data from the Employer on the university's financial position. Recall, the Employer came to the table with a package of claw-backs to our contract, citing the university's deficit as the reason for their pushing an austerity agenda and seeking other "efficiencies." This is a common enough message in bargaining, but the Employer claims that it is not "crying wolf" this time and that there is a real and concrete financial crisis. As we've reported before, we can't make decisions about matters of language in the contract – matters that have a direct effect on the terms and conditions of employment of our Members – without having a clear understanding of the university's financial position.



What is clear is that faculty members are not a priority in budgeting.

This round breaks new ground for the CBC, as the negotiations thus far have hinged on the big picture of university finances as opposed the minutiae of contract language. While this may seem an excruciatingly slow process, it is both a reasonable and responsible approach to bargaining. Too often we have taken the Employer's claims of poverty on faith, only to find out later that the university had miraculously gone from "crisis" to "good financial health," while faculty salaries have gone from low to the lowest in the province. The only way that we can get a fair and reasonable deal for you, our Members, is to spend the time crunching the numbers to get a clear sense of the financial outlook. Once we have that picture, we can start bargaining the language of the contract. We meet again on Tuesday and Wednesday, May 19 and 20, when we hope to finalize our data collection and analysis.