

BARGAINING BULLETIN #8



Hello, Rubber? Meet the Road.

In the last bulletin, we updated you on the need to stand together as a Membership and fight for fairness in pensions. As we head to conciliation on September 13, we are at a crucial point in bargaining where your strength, confidence and public support will give your team at the table a firm mandate.

We need ALL of you to come to the **Special Membership Meeting regarding FASBU negotiations on Monday Sept 9 at 11:30 am in F213 (Theatre)**. At that meeting we will hold a strike vote to give the Executive a mandate to call for labour action if negotiations make that necessary. The vote will begin at the meeting and voting will continue for three days, ending at 7 pm on Thursday September 12.

No one wants to be locked out or go on strike, ever. Not the NUFA Executive, the Collective Bargaining Committee (CBC) or the rest of our Members. We didn't want to in 2015 and we don't want to now. But, let us remember that the best insurance *against* having to go on strike is to go into conciliation with a strong strike mandate. Being strong — and looking it — are the best tools we have, and they are powerful tools. Sometimes you have to stand up to help them get real.

What does a strong strike vote do for bargaining? It tells our Employer that when they look across the table at Jane Barker, our steadfast FASBU Chief Negotiator, they are actually facing down 170 FASBU faculty standing behind her. These are faculty who, contrary to what the Employer has said, care deeply about the whole university community, not just ourselves. But we also care about getting a reasonable contract. A strong strike vote tells the Employer that we are serious about getting some increase in compensation—more than the near-zero “offer” on the table right now. We also need to be clear that we say “no” to claw backs on collective agreement rights. Remember what is under attack:

- Protections for contract faculty workload and job security,
- Teaching release for research and service,
- Tenure and promotion
- Research awards
- Equity for librarians and archivists

The fact is, we brought forward a fiscally modest and responsible request on pensions and we were met with a near total refusal to discuss it and at the same time were confronted with an unprecedented number of concessionary demands to our existing terms and conditions.

This Employer does not seem to understand the give and take of negotiations, or the fundamental principles of fairness required to build a vibrant teaching and research community. They are operating on a take-take mandate.

What does a poor or lukewarm strike vote mean? It means we lose. Big.

Timelines:

<i>Special Membership Meeting</i>	September 9 @11:30am
<i>Strike Vote</i>	September 9-12
<i>Conciliation meeting</i>	September 13
<i>No-board report</i>	Can be requested at any time during conciliation
<i>Legal lockout/strike position</i>	17 days from the no-board report

The buzz has started on campus about our negotiations and what they mean for students, staff and the North Bay community. You will receive, if you haven't already, questions from students, neighbours, friends and co-workers about the state of negotiations. While all official statements on bargaining must come through the NUFA President, you should feel comfortable and even encouraged to let people you talk to know about our issues. And you should also feel like you can set folks straight --in a friendly and factual way-- if they have misinformation. Here are some **FAQs** and some answers if you do run into questions in your classroom or the grocery store:

Are you going on strike? We are ready to make a fair deal and do not want to go on strike. Having a strike vote and preparing for labour action, whether strike or lock-out is a normal part of the collective bargaining process. That said, we will be prepared to stand firm if the Employer continues to demand claw-backs and refuses to negotiate a fair deal.

Why are you taking a strike vote? Our Employer has called in a conciliator which means that at any point either side could call for a "no-board report" which just means the potential of strike or lock-out. As a union, we are legally obliged to ask our Members democratically to empower our Executive to make a decision on whether to strike should negotiations fail to result in a new collective agreement.

What are your issues? We are trying to protect the job security and working conditions of our contract faculty Members, along with institutional support for research. We are also looking for significant improvements in our pension because we have one of the worst pensions of any university faculty in Ontario. We want secure and stable retirement incomes so faculty are not financially compelled to work past age 65.

Why should I care about faculty issues? Students should care because good, stable jobs for professors makes for a better classroom experience, more teaching and program innovation, more mentorship and one-on-one time with profs, and more opportunities for research and experiential learning. The North Bay community should be standing behind faculty who are trying to keep good jobs in our community. A strong pension also means that faculty will continue to be taxpayers and local shoppers even after they have left their employment at the university.

We are in a challenging time (another one!) in our history as an Association, but the Executive and bargaining team are confident we can pull through this and be stronger at the end. We are a wonderful community of smart and dedicated professionals, and we look after each other. Let's take some time to remember why we love what we do and celebrate our hard work by joining together at the first NUFA Social.

SOLIDARITY SOCIAL & TRIVIA NIGHT!

**The Loft at Churchill's
Thursday Sept 5th @ 7-9 PM**

