

BARGAINING BULLETIN #2

CASBU BARGAINING UPDATE Stalemate: Strike Vote!

The CASBU Collective Bargaining Committee and the Employer have jointly filed for Conciliation. Why this should matter to you is outlined below. Whether you've been following the bargaining process from the beginning, are new to Nipissing University, or are somewhere in between, we would ask that you add **VOTE on Monday October 3rd** to your calendar.

Background:

CASBU's Collective Agreement expired on April 30, 2022. Since that time, the CASBU Collective Bargaining Committee (CBC) and the Employer have been meeting to negotiate the terms of the new Collective Agreement. Last week, both sides agreed that they are so far apart that they will file jointly for Conciliation.

What's causing the stalemate?

While some progress has been made on issues to do with working conditions, the Employer refuses to support CASBU members in securing better and more secure jobs, refuses to help CASBU members and their families to pursue further education, refuses to support CASBU initiatives in favour of equity and justice, and refuses to offer financial compensation that keeps up with the rising cost of living. Come to the meeting to hear more about all these issues.

Who is at the table?

For the Employer, Chief Negotiator Cheryl Sutton, the Vice President of Finance and Administration, is accompanied by Carole Richardson, the Provost and Vice President Academic and Research (interim); and Jenny Mackie, Assistant Vice-President, Human Resources & Equity, Diversity & Inclusion.

Evan Hoffman, instructor in Political Science, is the Chief Negotiator for CASBU. He is supported by Erin Dokis, CASBU Member-at-Large and instructor in Gender Equality and Social Justice & History; Laura Killam, instructor in Nursing; Dan McGarry, instructor in Business; Rhiannon Don, instructor in Academic Writing, as well as the past Chief-Negotiator for CASBU and NUFA's Executive Officer; and Sarah Winters (FASBU), the President of NUFA.

What is Conciliation?

A conciliator is a mediator appointed by the Ministry of Labour to help mediate the negotiation process. Usually, each team stays in a separate room and the conciliator travels back and forth,

helping each team to identify its priorities and then acting as a liaison between the teams to help them to reach an agreement. Conciliation is not binding for either side. If, at any point, either side feels that the process isn't working, they can ask for a "no board report," which the conciliator must issue. A no board report starts a countdown clock, and 17 days later, the union would be in a legal strike position and the employer in a legal lockout position. NUFA's experiences with conciliation have largely been positive. The conciliators are good at getting the process moving and helping both sides to see when they're making unreasonable demands.

Why a Strike Vote and Why Now?

Since Conciliation will probably take place in mid-October, CASBU will need a strong turnout of members to vote in favour of a strike in order to demonstrate their strength and unity to the Conciliator. A strong strike mandate can, in turn, be used to push the Employer to agree to a fairer deal.

As a member of CASBU, you may be motivated by any number of desires: the desire to get a fair deal; the desire to show your solidarity and support for your colleagues; the desire to make the stress of bargaining disappear; and the desire to avoid a strike. In fact, the path to all of these ends is the same: being sure to vote to give your bargaining team a strong strike mandate. The history of labour negotiations in every sector has demonstrated repeatedly that the best way to force employers to show respect for their workers and to avoid a strike is, ironically, to vote in favour of one.

Strike Vote Procedures

You can cast your vote for or against giving the NUFA Executive a mandate to call for a strike if one is deemed necessary. The vote will begin at a Special Membership Meeting for CASBU **October 3 at 1pm** and voting (in person or electronically on Zoom) will continue for three days, ending at 7:00 p.m. on October 6.

The meeting is the best place for you to ask any questions you may have. We will be sending out FAQs soon, but nothing can compensate for hearing your colleagues tell you their story of what has been happening, what is happening with other faculty associations in Ontario, and what could happen if we don't have a strong show of solidarity. If you can come, please come! And whether you can come or not, **PLEASE VOTE!**