

For Immediate Release

## **Faculty Members Reject Offer from Dalhousie Board of Governors**

(Monday, October 26, 2020 – Halifax, NS) More than 95% of the members of the Dalhousie Faculty Association have voted to reject the offer made by the Dalhousie Board of Governors during conciliation last week.

A total of 865 members – representing 90% of the DFA bargaining unit – cast a ballot in the vote which ended today at 1 pm.

“This strong vote to reject the Board’s “best offer”, coupled with a strike mandate of higher than 90% delivered in early October, puts us in a strong and clear position as we continue to try and negotiate an agreement with the Board,” says DFA President David Westwood.

Conciliation talks broke off on October 19 after the Board presented its best offer. The offer contained an extremely poor monetary package and continued to push for pension concessions, in addition to rejecting all non-monetary proposals made by the DFA.

“The Board is pushing us out on a strike by continuing to demand changes to our pension plan,” explains Westwood. “Last week, the Department of Labour proposed a conciliation board, and the Dalhousie Board of Governors refused.”

Today, the DFA [sent a request to the Board suggesting a conciliation board](#) be struck to try and save the fall term from disruption. In a conciliation board, an experienced mediator chairs a board made up of conciliation members representing each party. This approach can often come up with solutions that both parties can accept, resulting in a settlement and avoiding job actions.

As of Friday, November 6, the DFA will be in a legal strike position and the Board will be in a legal lock-out position, provided either side gives 48 hours’ notice of job action. The two sides are scheduled to meet with the Board via conciliation officer Peter Lloyd on November 3 and 4 to try and reach an agreement before then.

“Nobody wants a strike,” emphasizes Westwood. “It causes disruption and uncertainty for everyone - students, faculty and staff alike. I am hopeful that the Board will eventually hear our voices: they need to recognize that protecting our pension plan is a top priority and we are not prepared to let it go. They need to engage with us in a more reasonable manner, and they need to drop their bullying tactics so that we can reach a deal and return to our work without any additional and unnecessary stress.”

Back in May, the Board rejected DFA’s initial approach, which was to delay bargaining for a year and allow time for some of the uncertainty related to COVID-19 to settle down.

The current collective agreement expired June 30, 2020. The two sides met seven times during the summer and were unable to reach an agreement. Conciliation broke down October 19 after only a few hours. Conciliation officer Peter Lloyd filed his report with the Department of Labour October 22, starting the 14-day countdown to legal job action.



The Dalhousie Faculty Association represents 950 professors, instructors, librarians and professional counsellors at Dalhousie University. As a volunteer-based organization, we advocate for the rights of our members and work to protect and advance the academic integrity of the University.

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