

Bargaining Bulletin

Issue #1: October 3, 2022

DFA 2022 Bargaining Team

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Jack Brown
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*Short videos introducing the DFA
Bargaining Team Members can be
found on the home page of
dfa.ns.ca*

At-the-Table Update: First Collective Bargaining Meeting held Thursday, September 29, 2022

On Thursday, September 29, our DFA bargaining team met with the Board's team for the first time in a two-hour session held on Zoom (9:30 am -11:30 am). After discussing some ground rules for negotiations, the teams took turns presenting their packages of proposals. The DFA team was able to present and offer context and rationale for all of our proposals, whereas time did not permit a discussion of all of the Board's proposals. Unlike previous bargaining rounds, the Board's team did not table a salary offer, but will instead respond to our proposals at a future meeting. Consequently, it is not yet clear whether the Board is prepared to offer the kind of wage increases that our Members require to keep pace with the cost of living, and with salaries at comparable institutions in Canada. The Board's team communicated that they do not intend to seek wage rollbacks or pension reforms in the present round of bargaining. While the news about the pension plan is a refreshing change from previous bargaining rounds, any salary offer below the rate of inflation is effectively a wage rollback so we shall see.

The Board's team tabled some principled, and progressive proposals that show an interest in addressing some concerns that we have raised in past rounds regarding the status and working conditions of DFA Instructor Members. Time did not permit a full discussion of these proposals.

The Board's team expressed an interest in ending the Academic Renewal Letter of Understanding (LOU) negotiated in the 2018 bargaining round, in addition to the provisions of the COVID-19 Letter of Understanding from the 2020 round. There is a crucial principle embedded in the Academic Renewal LOU that is not time-limited and that guarantees the replacement of all DFA Members who leave the bargaining unit (although not necessarily in the same Unit or Faculty), which is not something we intend to give up. It is not clear why the Board wishes to eliminate this important provision since enrolment continues to grow and there is already a shortage of academic staff on the ground to do all of the work that is necessary.

This first meeting offered signals that the Board's team is interested in working together to address some issues of mutual concern, which is a far cry from the way we were treated in the last round of bargaining. While I remain cautiously optimistic, I will reserve my judgment until we see how the Board's team responds to our salary proposals, which are so important in the current economic context.

DFA

Dalhousie Faculty Association

Finding times to meet the Board's team continues to prove challenging, and we need them to agree to further dates in October if there is a realistic chance of concluding a new contract before winter break. The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, October 14, 2022 for one hour.

If you have questions or comments, you can reach out to dfa@dal.ca or to me directly at david.a.westwood@gmail.com.



Dave Westwood
DFA President, 2022-2023

Stay in touch and up to date!

After each meeting, we will distribute bulletins to our Bargaining Unit Members. Please also stay connected by visiting us online and on social media:

dfa.ns.ca

WeAreDal.ca

Twitter: @dalfacultyassoc

Facebook: dalfacultyassoc

Dalhousie Board of Governors Bargaining Team

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