

Bargaining Bulletin

Issue #4: November 10, 2022

DFA 2022 Bargaining Team

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For short videos of the DFA
Bargaining Team Members, visit:
dfa.ns.ca/bargaining/bargaining-2022

On November 8, the DFA held a General Meeting for our Bargaining Unit Members. More than 200 Members joined the zoom for an update on where we are with bargaining. This Bargaining Bulletin summarizes what was discussed at the meeting.

DFA Files for Conciliation

Following the General Meeting on November 8, the DFA applied to the Minister of Labour for the appointment of a conciliation officer. While we wait for that process to unfold, scheduled bargaining meetings will be held (see bargaining dates in Next Steps), and our team will continue to do its best to negotiate with the Board's team to reach a new Collective Agreement.

There is at least a 4-6 week wait for a conciliation officer to be appointed. **Timing is everything in the bargaining process.** For us to possibly have a new Collective Agreement to bring to the Membership for ratification by early 2023, we need to begin the conciliation process now.

The Background

DFA filed Notice to Bargain more than seven months ago, on April 1, 2022. The DFA then proposed to the Board close to two dozen dates and times. Only a few were agreed to by the Board and the two sides have met five times: September 29; October 14 and 19; November 1 and 3. (A meeting scheduled for September

19 was cancelled by the Board.) Each meeting was 2 hours in duration and held via zoom.

The DFA tabled its full set of proposals, monetary and non-monetary, at the first meeting in September. This would allow the parties to get to work quickly and make good use of the limited number of meetings scheduled. **Despite having more than seven months to prepare, the Board has yet to table its full monetary proposal.**

Up until the day before our General Meeting held on November 8, the Board had been telling the DFA that its salary and term proposals could not be ready until after a meeting of the Board's Governance and Human Resources Committee on December 1. On November 7, the Board told us that they can present their full proposals, including salary and term, on November 24.

The Board's Non-Monetary Proposals

Highlighted below are some of the proposals made by the Board that we believe would have a significant impact on DFA Members.

CDI and Annual Reports

- Career Development Increments (CDI) and steps into merit-based rewards that would be granted only on the positive recommendation of the responsible Dean.
- Annual reports would become a regular tool for scrutinizing annual productivity and performance.
- Members holding the same rank for more than 10 years are not automatically eligible for CDI.

Sabbatical Leave and Education Leave

- The Board wants to restrict access to sabbaticals and education leaves by capping the total number of such leaves in a career at five years, and by making it easier for Deans to deny leave applications based on previous performance during sabbaticals.

Disciplining Professors

- The Board wants to increase Deans' powers to discipline Professors by making it possible for disciplinary letters to be put in a Member's file without DFA involvement and without recourse to the University Hearing Committee.

Integrity of the DFA Bargaining Unit

- Adjusting the "90/10" rule: The Board proposed an adjustment to the long-standing "90/10" rule that guarantees that no more than 10% of our Bargaining Unit work can be done by non-DFA academics. Their proposal would enable them to hire more part-time academics at lower wages and with far greater precarity.
- Deleting language intended to maintain the complement: The Board proposes to remove an LOU that includes a commitment to replace all tenure stream Members who retire or resign with Bargaining Unit tenure stream appointments within the overall complement of the University.

Changing the Test for Tenure

- The Board wants to change the standards used to award tenure through a more rigorous test focused on evidence of productivity. The Board was asked if there is any evidence that the current test is creating any problems and not sufficiently rigorous and the answer was there is no evidence. This is about perception and reputation.

Unused Money from the Travel Fund (\$1,000,000)

- Since travel was very restricted during COVID, there is a \$1,000,000 surplus of unused money in the travel fund. The travel fund is available for use by almost all Members. The Board proposes a very narrow research scheme for that money to be awarded by a committee of the Associate Deans of Research. The Board also proposes that any money not awarded by its committee be returned to the Board.

Instructor Proposal

- The Board has proposed to "elevate" the Instructor stream to a "Professoriate (Teaching)" stream, an idea that the DFA has proposed in the past. Despite several concerns about the Board's

proposed concept, we have expressed an interest in working on this proposal. A significant number of variables and details have been identified that would require concentrated research and consultation with members. DFA has tabled a counter-proposal to send the concept to a joint panel that would come back with recommendations within the next 18-months.

Next Steps

While we wait for the appointment of a conciliation officer, our Bargaining Team will continue to meet with the Board to bargain. There are five dates scheduled: November 21, 24 and 28; December 8 (for one hour only) and December 12.

We will update our Membership on the Board's monetary proposals once they have been presented.

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



Dave Westwood
DFA President, 2022-2023

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