

President's Message: November 2022

Dave Westwood, DFA President, 2022-2023

David.Westwood@dal.ca

Dear Colleagues,

Let me begin by sharing important local, provincial, and national news about collective bargaining in the education sector.

DFA Bargaining

As you will have seen, we have called a **General Meeting of the DFA Bargaining Unit for Tuesday November 8, 2022 (2:00-3:00 pm)** to provide an important update on our negotiations with the Board.

CUPE 3912 Strike

Photo caption (left): Mandy Kay-Raining Bird, Pierre Stevens and their pups support CUPE3912.

Photo caption (right): DFA President Dave Westwood proudly waves the DFA flag in solidarity with CUPE3912.



CUPE3912 is now in the third week of its strike. Additional bargaining meetings were held November 2 and 3, but the two sides were unable to reach an agreement and the labour disruption continues.

The DFA Executive Committee recently approved a contribution of \$2,500 in support of CUPE strike efforts.

DFA Members continue to report mounting pressure from administrators and students to make changes to their courses in response to this prolonged labour disruption, and we are even hearing of demands from administrators for DFA Members to engage in scab

labour by doing the work vacated by striking CUPE 3912 workers. As I have written previously, DFA Members are encouraged to maintain existing course plans until the strike ends, and then consider if and which changes might be necessary. Responsibility for the work vacated by striking CUPE 3912 workers belongs to management, not DFA Members. Please reach out immediately if you are pressured to engage in scab labour. CUPE updates [here](#).



Provincial Update

Our colleagues from SMUFU (Saint Mary's University Faculty Union) and CBUFA (Cape Breton University Faculty Association) have filed for conciliation in negotiations with their respective employers. NSGEU

education workers remain on strike in the Valley and South Shore regions in their fight for wage parity with colleagues in other regions of the province.

National Update

In Ontario, the Ford government has tabled a bill to impose a collective agreement on CUPE education workers and to set aside constitutionally protected rights to engage in collective bargaining and to strike. Tensions remain high as CUPE is threatening to engage in political activism by ignoring the tabled legislation that would make a strike illegal. Labour organizations around the country are condemning the Ford government for invoking the notwithstanding clause to set aside important labour rights, which would create a highly charged political environment in which Canadians could see a return to highly disruptive wildcat strikes.

It seems clear we are entering an era of labour disruption as workers stand up for their rights and for fair wages in the face of record corporate profits, high inflation, and provincial governments that insist on austerity.

MFA and Governance Updates

I have heard from many Members who are concerned about the new mandatory MFA (Multi-factor authentication) requirements for accessing Dalhousie systems including email. Like you, I am also concerned about this downloading of responsibility for network security to DFA Members in terms of your time, but also the potential impact on your own personal cellphone or data plans. While the Board has offered alternative approaches that do not require a personal mobile device, I have heard that these other options are cumbersome and do not necessarily work for all devices. We will raise these concerns at the Association-Board Committee, and request an extension to the current deadlines which would see changes come into place before the end of the academic term which could create more unnecessary problems and disruption.

As I have written previously, there are many issues unfolding in relation to governance in the higher education sector, including the recent report commissioned by Dalhousie's Board of Governors. In response to these issues, we have partnered with the Association of Nova Scotia University Teachers and CAUT to present a virtual public forum on University governance featuring academic perspectives on governance from faculty, students, and academic staff associations. The tentative date is Tuesday, January 17, 2023 in the evening. Stay tuned for further updates as this event approaches.

ANSUT Releases Report on University Administration Compensation


The Association of Nova Scotia University Teachers (ANSUT) recently released [*A Culture of Entitlement: An Overview of Administrative Compensation at Eight Nova Scotia Universities 2011/12 – 2020/21*](#). The report examines the compensation and quantity of senior and upper-level administration at eight Nova Scotia universities, painting a clear picture of how, as executive compensation skyrockets, faculty and students struggle to keep up. Highlights of the report include (average at eight universities, over 10 years):

- 84% increase in spending on administrative salaries
- 73% increase in number of administrative positions (from 284 in 2012 to 491 in 2021)
- 41% increase in spending on presidents' compensation, plus 13% in bonus/allowance/benefits

These increases are in stark contrast to faculty quantity, which has risen an average of just 5% over the same timeframe. During the same period, student enrolment has risen an average of 9% and tuition has increased over 52%. (*Dalhousie and Kings are not included in the report. DFA is not a member of ANSUT.*)

Recognizing Fair Employment Week

Thank you to Gerry Potter, Director/Producer of *In Search of Professor Precarious*, who joined DFA on October 20 for a discussion about his documentary exploring the issues facing contract academic staff. For those who want to learn more about how we can start to address these issues, Gerry recommended the book *Power Despite Precarity: Strategies for the Contingent Faculty Movement in Higher Education* (Berry and Worthen, Pluto Press, 2021, Paperback ISBN: 9780745345529, eBook ISBN: 9780745345543) To recognize Fair Employment Week, DFA also participated in CAUT's social media day of action on October 19 – check us out on twitter @dalfacultyassoc to see our tweets.



**VIOLA DESMOND
LEGACY LECTURE**
November 15, 2022
7:00-8:30pm (AST)

**DALHOUSIE
UNIVERSITY**

with **Vivek Shraya**
Artist & Educator on Self-Expression,
Identity and Inclusivity

Tuesday, November 15, 2022 from 7:00 – 8:30 pm
Microsoft Teams. [Info here](#)
Brought to you by Dal's Office of Equity and Inclusion.

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Visit us www.dfa.ns.ca or www.wearedal.ca

Email dfa@dal.ca

Phone 902.494.3722