

# Bargaining Bulletin

## Issue #1: May 30, 2025

### DFA Begins Bargaining with the Dalhousie Board

Your DFA Bargaining Team is wrapping up a busy week of discussions with the Dalhousie Board's Bargaining Team, with face-to-face meetings held Monday (full day), Wednesday (full day), Thursday (half day) and Friday (full day).

DFA presented its full package of proposals to the DFA Bargaining Unit Membership at meetings on May 13 (hybrid) and again on May 20 (virtual). [You can see the highlights of our proposals here.](#) DFA tabled its full package of proposals at the first meeting of the two bargaining teams on Monday, May 26.

### Proposals from the Board

The Board tabled its non-monetary proposals on Monday and followed with monetary proposals on Thursday afternoon. This is a significant departure from past practice whereby the Board refuses to table monetary proposals until Fall enrollment figures crystallize.

The **Board's non-monetary proposals** include:

- Eliminate library-specific appointments committees and change reporting relationships.
- Eliminate existing limits on hours of work for librarians.
- Weaken the 90/10 rule (*which ensures that 90% of key academic work is done by academic staff protected by the DFA Collective Agreement*) by adopting a new 80/20 rule. Additionally, limited-term instructors would be counted toward the 80% whereas such appointments are currently excluded from the overall count.
- Establish for the first time a limit on sabbatical entitlement at five years maximum for an entire career at Dalhousie regardless of accrued service. At present, eligible Members are entitled to a full year sabbatical for every six years of service without limit.
- Reduce entitlements to "automatic" Career Development Increments (CDIs) so that the Dean's recommendation will now be required to receive a CDI after 10 years in the same rank.
- Weaken existing discipline provisions so that any record of discipline relating to a finding under the Sexualized Violence Policy or the (new) Discrimination Policy would remain in the Member's personal file permanently. At present, all records of discipline are automatically removed from a Member's file after 18 months if no further discipline has been received.

### DFA Bargaining Team

**David Wallbridge**  
*Lead Negotiator, Pink Larkin*

**Patti Doyle-Bedwell**  
*Open Learning and Career Development*

**Iona Green**  
*Accounting and Finance (Agriculture)*

**Tim Juckes**  
*Psychology and Neuroscience*

**Tom Koo**  
*Marketing*

**Joanne Mills**  
*Professional Counsellor*

**Julia M. Wright**  
*English*

**Jack Brown**  
*DFA Professional Officer*

**Lynn Purves**  
*DFA Administrative Officer*

### Dalhousie Board's Bargaining Team

**Laura Neals**  
*Spokesperson  
AVP, Labour and Employee Relations*

**Cheryl Earle**  
*AVP Finance*

**Dipti Periwal**  
*Manager, Labour and Employee Relations*

**Brenda Merritt**  
*Dean, Faculty of Health*

**Michael Vandenburg**  
*Dean, Libraries*

- Extend the higher salary maximum for Members appointed to the former Rowe School of Business to all DFA Members in the Faculty of Management.
- The definition of family would be expanded for bereavement leave.
- An extra five days off (including three paid) would be granted to allow Indigenous faculty to attend ceremonial events.

The **Board's monetary proposal** was structured so that a full cost-of-living adjustment would be granted only if DFA accepts concessions that would weaken the 90/10 rule. Three "options" were proposed for cost-of-living adjustments to wages (the Income Maintenance Change, or IMC, in the Collective Agreement). Keep in mind that inflation is approximately 2% every year, so an IMC of less than 2% in any year represents a cut to wages in real terms. Over the past three collective agreements, DFA salaries have fallen behind inflation by a cumulative total of 9%, which means that a 9% IMC adjustment is required simply to bring salaries back to a neutral position relative to inflation at the beginning of a new collective agreement, and an additional 6% IMC is required over the life of a three-year contract to ensure no further slippage in real wages.

1. **IMC of 1.5% (i.e., an effective pay cut of approximately 0.5%) each year** of a three-year agreement if DFA does not agree to concessions that would weaken the 90/10 rule **OR**
2. **IMC of 1.75% (i.e., an effective pay cut of approximately 0.25%) each year** of a three-year agreement if DFA agrees to weaken the 90/10 rule by allowing limited-term instructors to be counted in the **90% of the 90/10 formula** **OR**
3. **IMC of 2% (i.e., keep pace with inflation) each year** of a three-year agreement, plus **an additional 1%** to be used in other areas such as enhancing the size of the CDI, **IF the DFA agrees to concessions that would significantly reduce the 90/10 rule and move to include LTA instructors in the 90%.**

For context, the DFA proposed an IMC increase of 9%, 6% and 6% (21% total) over a three-year agreement which would (1) catch DFA Members up to the actual cost of living at the start of the contract, (2) keep pace with inflation over the lifetime of the contract, and (3) increase wages by 2% each year of the contract. Clearly, the Board does not believe that DFA Members are entitled to keep pace with the cost of living.

### Next Steps

No dates for bargaining were possible for much of June due to scheduling constraints on both sides. The DFA Bargaining Team will use this time to digest the Board's proposals and explanations, and develop counterproposals where appropriate. The teams are scheduled to meet again on June 20, with the majority of bargaining days scheduled for July. Updates will be provided as bargaining continues. If the DFA Bargaining Team does not see significant movement on the Board's initial proposals calling for serious concessions and wage reductions then Members should expect an emergency meeting of the DFA Bargaining Unit sometime in July where we will discuss steps toward escalation. *(The Bargaining Unit consists of all professors, instructors, librarians and counsellors covered under the DFA/Board Collective Agreement.)*



### Job Action Committee

The Job Action Committee, co-chaired by Jason Haslam (English) and Kiran Banerjee (Political Science), has been busy over the past couple months getting prepared in the event that job action occurs. As always, your Bargaining Team will make every effort to negotiate a fair deal for our Members, but the DFA must be prepared should bargaining and conciliation be unsuccessful. If you are interested in serving on the JAC, please email DFA Membership Services Officer [Travis.Perry@dal.ca](mailto:Travis.Perry@dal.ca).

Please email [dfa@dal.ca](mailto:dfa@dal.ca) with comments and questions.

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