

For Immediate Release

DFA REJECTS DALHOUSIE'S "OFFER" OF INTEREST ARBITRATION and FILES COMPLAINT WITH NS DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR

(Thursday, August 28, 2025 – Halifax, NS) Earlier today, the DFA Executive Committee voted to reject Dalhousie Board of Governors' "offer" to engage in interest arbitration, and also approved the filing of a complaint with the Nova Scotia Labour Board.

The Board of Governors did not suggest interest arbitration at the bargaining table, rather it was delivered to DFA's lead negotiator with a copy sent to Mr. Rick Rose, provincial conciliation officer. It was followed a few hours later with the public release to the Dalhousie community.

"If the Board had engaged in meaningful and substantive bargaining since we first sat down late May, it is possible that we could have already ratified a new collective agreement with no disruption to the Fall semester," says DFA President Dave Westwood. "Instead, here we are, on the picket lines and classes were supposed to start on Tuesday."

Interest arbitration would focus on the single issue of the wage increase. In their public-facing message to the Dalhousie community, the Board did not communicate that their offer to proceed to interest arbitration is conditional on the DFA dropping all unresolved proposals.

"The Board deliberately misrepresented their offer in their messaging, omitting the key detail that their proposal on interest arbitration required the DFA to abandon all unresolved proposals except wages," says Westwood.

The DFA has many proposals still on the table including: conversion of "long-term" limited-term appointments to career-stream appointments; expanded parental leave benefits; expanded access to childcare; and increased flexibility in class scheduling policies to acknowledge caregiving responsibilities. These proposals would provide immediate benefits to early-career academics who are struggling with many economic and other challenges.

"All along we have been asking the Board to come back to the table and they have refused," says Westwood. "They created this mess by refusing to bargain, refusing to come back to the table and refusing to listen when we warned them repeatedly of the dangerous game that they were playing by threatening, and then ultimately following through with, a lockout in August."

The DFA Executive Committee today also approved a motion to file a bargaining complaint with the Labour Board based on Dalhousie's use of public messages to bargain directly with DFA Members and to circumvent bargaining at the table through appropriate channels. The complaint asks the Minister to order the Board of Governors back to the table.

"Discussion needs to happen at the bargaining table," says Westwood. "It's time the Board of Governors stop undermining the integrity of the collective bargaining process and delaying the resolution of the situation."

DFA has been locked out since August 20, 2025. In response, the union launched a defensive strike that took effect Friday, August 22, 2025.

DFA LOCKOUT RALLY

The DFA is holding a Lockout Rally Friday, August 29 at 12 noon. Students are back on campus, other Faculty Associations from across the country will be joining us, so we are expecting a turnout even bigger than last week's crowd of over 300.

- Friday, August 29, 2025
- 12 noon to approximately 12:40 pm
- In Front of Killam Library, [6225 University Ave](#)

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The DFA is the certified bargaining agent for almost 1,000 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.