



For Immediate Release

Collective Agreement between DFA and Dalhousie Board of Governors Ratified

(Halifax, NS – February 17, 2021) – Both the DFA and the Dalhousie Board of Governors have now formally ratified the tentative agreement reached in January.

The DFA membership voted in favour of the agreement last month, with 96% of voting members accepting the agreement. Last week, the Board of Governors ratified the agreement. The new Collective Agreement will be in effect from July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2022.

“This was an extremely challenging and unprecedented round of bargaining given the global pandemic and massive impacts on our members' working conditions,” says DFA President David Westwood. “It was further complicated by changes in government regulations around pensions, like enhancements to the CPP program and also Nova Scotia Pension Regulations.”

Several important non-monetary gains have been achieved, including copyright of online materials, educational leave for instructors, work-from-home expense reimbursement and support for extraordinary administrative service loads provided by members of designated groups.

“In terms of economic issues, we have preserved the basic structure of our pension plan,” says Westwood. “We have also negotiated a very modest wage increase to protect against inflation.”

The next round of bargaining will begin mid-2022, and the DFA will begin preparing later this year.

“We will be looking to achieve wage parity with comparator institutions and continue advancing equity in the workplace for members of designated groups,” says Westwood. “In the meantime, we look forward to the newly-commissioned report on the Dalhousie Pension Plan, and anticipate that it will remove any lingering doubt that the pension plan is healthy and more affordable now than ever.”

Collective bargaining began in June 2020. Talks broke down in October and conciliation officer Peter Lloyd was appointed by the provincial government. After one day of conciliation, the parties were at an impasse. DFA and the Board of Governors agreed to a Conciliation Board, which met for several days in November. The Conciliation Board helped the two sides reach agreement on all but two issues: wage increase and educational leave for instructors. The Conciliation Board filed a report with non-binding recommendations concerning those two issues. The DFA accepted the recommendations in the report, but the Dalhousie Board of Governors did not. After one further day of conciliation on January 8, 2021, a tentative agreement was reached.

The DFA is the certified bargaining agent for more than 950 professors, instructors, librarians and professional counsellors at Dalhousie. 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.

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