

September 10 Union Response

Union Response, September 10

With the completion of this week's bargaining, we have now completed more than half of our scheduled bargaining dates with the College Employer Council. There are eight scheduled bargaining dates remaining before our Collective Agreement expires. Five weeks have now passed since the Union tabled our comprehensive non-monetary proposals. Monetary proposals are limited by the concessions imposed by the Ford government's Bill 124 which caps public sector compensation increases at 1% per year, effectively a pay cut when considering inflation.

With less than three weeks left until our Collective Agreement expires, the employer's bargaining team has yet to table language around several of the changes that they have indicated they wish to make to our Collective Agreement, or what they have called "areas of concern". In addition, they have not presented counter-proposals on the majority of key faculty demands, and have simply dismissed several others.

Today, the employer team proposed language on respectful workplaces, dates for union release time, and the assignment of coordinator duties. They did not address faculty concerns around structural changes in relation to harassment and discrimination, and dismissed the need for joint union-employer committee work to be recorded on SWFs. In addition, the employer team continued in their questioning of the legitimacy of faculty demands rather than dealing with the substance of these concerns.

In their responses, the CEC chair has repeatedly suggested that the faculty team has not provided answers to their questions about the data that underlies our proposals. The faculty team has explained that our data is gathered through an extensive and continuing process of consultations with faculty, both through the months-long demand-setting process, as well as through ongoing consultations with local leaders, the bargaining advisory committee, organizers, and specific sub-groups such as counsellors. In addition, our team has conducted reviews of collective agreement settlements and existing language in post-secondary institutions across Ontario and Canada, relied on research from organizations such as the Canadian Association of University Teachers, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations, as well as the employer's own publicly available information. In addition, we have concluded our *2021 Update on Education in Ontario Colleges*, which we expect to release shortly.

We are particularly disappointed that the employer has not yet provided any response to our proposals for gains for Partial-Load faculty, except to deny outright the need to create minimum staffing ratios of full-time to non-full-time faculty. Our other partial-load proposals include:

- Establishing a priority for the colleges to hire partial-load over other contract faculty categories
- Meaningful workload measurements (as opposed to paying PL faculty the same amount regardless of the number of students in their classes)
- Language to ensure equity in Partial-Load faculty workloads
- Transparency in the Partial-Load registry along with improved job security

In her remarks today, CEC team chair Laurie Rancourt stated that “in an established bargaining relationship, language should only be changed where there is a demonstrated need.” Neither the legitimacy of our data, nor the urgency with which faculty are experiencing a need for change should be in question. Faculty have sent the team to the bargaining table with a clear vision for a better future for Ontario colleges and students. The team developed a plan to make that vision a reality. We have demonstrated the need for change and provided specific language to address it. It is past time for the CEC team to do the same.

As is our practice, all proposals and notes shared at the table today are attached. For questions and comments, please contact bargainingteam2021@gmail.com