

The CMCFA bargaining team met with the team representing the employer for a second round of bargaining on December 9-11, 2014.

The chief negotiators for the CMCFA and Treasury Board, Jean-Marc Noël and Josée Lefebvre respectively, feel that building trust and a good working relationship among the parties is paramount. To this end, both sides readily agreed and signed off on a number of smaller “housekeeping” amendments to the collective agreement. These included standardizing and updating language to reflect changes in legislation and current practices, moving to electronic versions of previously printed materials, refining definitions and clarifying interpretation.

Having spent a great deal of time and effort explaining our proposals during our first round of bargaining, we were keenly interested in hearing the employer’s responses to our bargaining demands. The employer responded to our proposal on the workload article with a counter-proposal. We are currently preparing a response to their counter-proposal. The employer also responded to our language on joint consultation, grievance procedure, discipline, misconduct

in research, information and disclosure, and collegial governance – we will also respond with a counter-proposal.

It remains important for our team that transparency and collegial governance are central to how we operate as a university, and that the language of our agreement should reflect these principles. Once again the CMCFA stressed the importance of Faculty Association representation on both the Senate and the Board of Governors.

The CMCFA is also concerned about the increased use of contract academic staff, especially in the aftermath of the process of workforce adjustment we went through 2 years ago. To this end, during our first round of bargaining we requested that the employer provide information on all people that are performing UT work and who were hired on limited term contracts. We are still waiting for this information.

On the second day of negotiations, the employer presented the union with an amended proposal for the replacement of our current sick leave provisions with a “contracted-out” short-term disability benefit. The Faculty Association continues to vociferously oppose such a proposal, as do the other federal

public service unions that are members of the National Joint Council.

Given our demographics and our drastically lower utilization of the current sick leave provisions, the employer's approach to sick leave appears to be both punitive and inappropriate for our members in the UT group.

We requested that Treasury Board provide the Association with their "business case" for their sick leave proposal. We have also requested a copy of the Conference Board of Canada study that the employer is relying upon in its assessment of what they have coined "the industry standard". The bargaining team for the CMCFA has conducted its own review of sick leave provisions in our "industry" (other universities across Canada) and found that the vast majority of universities have sick leave provisions that are *more* generous than what we currently have in our collective agreement—a fact that we again stressed at the table.

We further made the point that our members do not let minor illnesses get in the way of performing their duties—every effort is made to teach, or when necessary, reschedule classes, respond to our students in a timely manner, and

meet all deadlines regarding the submission of marks. In short, we continue to perform our duties even when we are ill.

Our next set of dates for negotiations is February 10 – 12, 2015.