

Negotiations at a Glance

Shaking the Magic 3-Ball

It is midday on Friday the 16th. As I write this, CBC radio is announcing that UPEI's government grant will be cut three per cent. A three per cent increase in faculty salaries is what we have tabled on your behalf for next year, as part of our larger salary package. The three per cent reflects what it would take to get most of our faculty members to parity with other small universities in the region, a standard you have asked for in the membership survey. A three per cent increase also coincidentally allows us to keep pace with the growth in PEI's consumer price index since we signed our last contract, which has held between 2.9 and 3.1 per cent. Serendipitously then, the PEI Government, Stats-Can, and the UPEIFA seem all to have settled on three as a magic number, though for different reasons and purposes. I can't shake my gentle farming grandmother's voice in my head -- "things always come in threes" -- though this was usually a reference to a string of breakdowns in household goods: a vacuum cleaner on the fritz, a refrigerator that retired its service, and then the slightly anxious wait to discover what the third malfunctioning appliance would turn out to be.

It would be easy for us to be anxious about the news of the cutback and, of course, there would be some justification underlying our anxiety. But while there is cause for vigilance, carefulness, and reasonableness, there is no need to despair.

The budget news forces the administration to bluntly and realistically consider its spending priorities and the relative returns on its expenditures. It has decisions to make about the value it places on the academic staff of the university and the multiple contributions we make to the university through our educational mission, scholarly activity and multi-faceted services. There is a simple question at hand -- it is a question about priorities.

What are these priorities? It would not be difficult for any one of us to come up with a list of new administrative offices and appointments, or secondments to the bureaucratic ranks that we have witnessed in the last six months. Each new position creates its own attendant costs, and, for those moved out of old positions into new ones,

there are the costs associated with backfill. Additionally, we could point to the number of consultants that have visited our campus recently, ironically well paid to peddle--in some instances--their cost-cutting ideas. Are these, the ballooning bureaucratic ranks, the new priorities? One wouldn't think so, reading the draft statement on *Future Directions*.

The point is that the administration has latitude and discretion in determining how it will accommodate the decreased government grant. It has the power -- the deep power -- of choice and the ability to calculate its values. It can choose to recognize the priority of the human infrastructure that is in sizeable measure the academic staff. In the midst of a complex financial situation, this power remains real, as does our power to insist that we be heard on this issue.

We might hear much in the coming days of a budget "crisis," of the necessity of slash-and-burn cuts and deep freezes on spending and salaries. While we can recognize the complexity of the situation the university finds itself in, and while we can acknowledge the three per cent cut in the government grant will have real effects, we can also maintain our critical thinking skills and press the administration to measure its priorities wisely.

And in the spirit of critical thinking, let's recognize that a three per cent cut in the government's operating grant does not translate into a three per cent decline in UPEI's overall revenues. If, for instance, one were to use the 2011-12 UPEI Budget and reduce the operating grant to Main Campus by three per cent, the overall effect on UPEI's revenues is a hair less than one percent. This, of course, doesn't take AVC into account, but it is unclear what AVC's funding situation is at the moment, given the lack of information coming from the administration on this front. The point, however, is clear: a decline in one revenue stream does not produce an equivalent decline in overall revenues.

So, in the days to come: people, parity, priorities?

Sharon Myers

Where are we now?

The negotiating teams representing the UPEIFA BU#1 and the Board of Governors have met twice – on February 23rd and March 9th – during the time since our previous bulletin. In keeping with the promise to keep the membership informed, your negotiating team is pleased to provide this update.

At the initial meeting between the two teams on February 23rd, the teams discussed the protocols and ground rules that will guide our process in the coming months. The elements that were agreed to range from the remarkably mundane though organizationally helpful, to more significant matters such as the level at which articles will be opened and the right of both teams to hold an “open chair” at the table, where a visitor might be invited to join the team to speak to a particular issue. These matters are important, and they were resolved amicably.

The more contentious matter in the initial meeting concerned future meeting dates. The Board’s team indicated it wanted the teams to present the respective lists of articles each would open after three weeks (mid-March), and then to meet to exchange full packages of proposals after an additional two months delay (mid-May). This was disappointing given that we had provided the Board’s Team with 24 possible meeting dates between February 25th and April 5th. They responded that they were unavailable for any of those times. In the end, the teams agreed to meet to exchange lists of open articles on March 9th and to exchange complete packages of proposals on April 5th.

In the period between the two meetings our team, in consultation with the UPEIFA Executive, concluded that our proposals were

fully prepared and that we were ready to present these to the Board’s team on behalf of the membership. On March 7th we advised the Board team we would be tabling our package of proposals at the March 9th meeting.

Making every effort to move the process along efficiently and to represent your interests in a timely manner, we tabled the UPEIFA’s proposals on your behalf at the meeting on March 9th. We look forward to receiving the Board team’s proposals on April 5th.

At the end of the March 9th meeting, the teams agreed to a series of meeting dates that will take us through the summer (see page 4). We have requested further meeting dates between April 5th and May 4th and look forward to hearing from the Board’s team on this matter in the near future.

Valerie Campbell, Geoff Lindsay, Andrew Trivett, and Sharon Myers

Collective bargaining is not simply an instrument for pursuing external ends, whether these be mundane monetary gains or the erection of a private rule of law to protect the dignity of the worker in the face of managerial authority. Rather, collective bargaining is intrinsically valuable as an experience in self-government. It is the mode in which employees participate in setting the terms and conditions of employment, rather than simply accepting what their employer chooses to give them. ... If one believes ... that self-determination and self-discipline are inherently worthwhile, indeed, that they are the mark of a truly human community, then it is difficult to see how the law can be neutral about whether that type of economic democracy is to emerge in the workplace.

Paul Weiler, *Reconcilable Differences: New Directions in Canadian Labour Law*, 1980, 30.

List of Open Articles

FACULTY ASSOCIATION	BOARD of GOVERNORS
A-11 Association Rights	
A-13 Release Time for Faculty Association Officers	
	A-15 Correspondence
	B-2 Appointment of Faculty Members
	B-3 Department Chairs
	B-4 Directors and Coordinators, Interdisciplinary Academic Programs
	B-5 Ranks and Appointments, Librarians
	B-7 Retirement, Resignation and Termination
C-2 Sabbatical Leave	C-2 Sabbatical Leave
	C-7 Sick Leave
	C-9 Holidays
	C-13 Exchange Leave
D-1 Salary	D-1 Salary
	D-2 Administrative Release and Allowances
D-5 Group Benefits	
D-6 Professional Development and Travel Reimbursement (PDTR)	
D-9 (New) Tuition Waiver	
D-10 (New) Health, Wellness and Environment Benefit	
D-11 (New) Continuing Benefits for Retirees	
D-12 (New) Pensions	
	E-1 Evaluation of Teaching and Faculty Review Procedures
	E-2 Tenure and Promotion of Faculty
	E-3 Teaching Dossier
	E-4 External Letters of Reference
	E-5 Review of Librarians
	E-6 Policies and Procedures for Librarian Review
	E-7 Permanent Appointment and Promotion of Librarians
F-5 Term of the Agreement	F-5 Term of the Agreement
	F-6 Discipline
G-1 Sessional Instructors	G-1 Sessional Instructors
G-2 Clinical Nursing Instructors	
H-1 Workload	H-1 Workload
H-2 Working Conditions	
I Appendix A Appendix B Appendix C	I Appendix A Appendix B Appendix C

Appendix D		Appendix D	
J	MOU Retirement MOU Certification	J	MOU Retirement MOU Certification LOU #1, Integrity in Research LOU #2, Canada Research Chair

List of Forthcoming Meeting Dates Between Negotiating Teams

Friday, May 4, 8:30-5:00
 Saturday, May 5, 8:30-5:00
 Thursday, May 10, 8:30-5:00
 Friday, May 18, 8:30-5:00
 Saturday, May 19, 8:30-5:00
 Wednesday, May 23, 12:00-5:00
 Thursday, May 24, 8:30-5:00
 Friday, May 25, 10:00-5:00
 Saturday, May 26, 8:30-5:00
 Wednesday, May 30, 8:30-5:00
 Thursday, May 31, 11:00-5:00

Thursday, June 7, 8:30-5:00
 Friday, June 8, 8:30-5:00
 Saturday, June 9, 8:30-5:00
 Thursday, June 21, 8:30-5:00
 Friday, June 22, 8:30-5:00
 Saturday, June 23, 8:30-5:00

Thursday, July 5, 1:00-5:00
 Friday, July 6, 8:30-5:00
 Saturday, July 7, 8:30-5:00
 Wednesday, July 11, 8:30-5:00
 Thursday, July 12, 1:00-5:00
 Friday, July 13, 8:30-5:00
 Saturday, July 14, 8:30-5:00
 Saturday, July 28, 8:30-5:00

Wednesday, August 15, 8:30-5:00
 Thursday, August 16, 1:00-5:00
 Wednesday, August 22, 8:30-5:00
 Thursday, August 23, 1:00-5:00
 Friday, August 24, 8:30-5:00
 Tuesday, August 28, 8:30-5:00
 Thursday, August 30, 2:00-5:00

Annual General Meeting University of Prince Edward Island Faculty Association

*April 20, 2012
2:00-3:30 pm
Kelley 237*

(quorum necessary)

*The agenda will include an update on the status
of negotiations.*