

# Negotiations at a Glance

## Telling Old Stories, Singing Songs

My sense is that labour negotiations unfold as chapters in a book, and this week we delved into chapter 3. Chapter 1 was an introduction of sorts, establishing processes, plotting out dates, laying foundations, and so on. Chapter 2, which took fully two months to complete, was the outlining of respective proposals and initial introductory arguments in support of positions. I think we can safely say we understand what the administration's proposals contain and what it is the administration seeks. We've made serious efforts to explain our proposals to them, and we hope they have listened and taken our arguments in. And we've offered a few counter proposals for them to consider. But this past week, as we moved on to the next chapter, our explanatory technique changed.

One of my favourite songs lately – the list changes often – is *Caledonia* by Dougie MacLean. I like the melody, I like the narrative the song conveys, and I'm a sucker for a simple acoustic ballad, particularly one with a Celtic bent. It's primarily a song about returning home and so it becomes a song about place and identity and the ties that bind. But the precise lyrical snippet that runs through my mind this week goes "I've been telling old stories, singing songs, that make me think about where I came from." And that's the essence of what happens in chapter 3 at the negotiation table, for our team at least. Having outlined our proposals and offered information, data and arguments in support of them, our team now tries to explain what our proposals *mean* for the academic staff at UPEI. And we try to explain what the administration's proposals would *mean* for us as well – the implications, the complications, the effects both obvious and less obvious. This is

the phase where we tell the stories, sing the songs as it were, about the effects the various proposals would have on us as human beings who work – work very hard -- in this place where we come from. These are stories about people who do not want to feel micro-managed, suspected or inspected, but who do want to feel valued, trusted and respected.

And you have helped us to tell these stories, and we are very grateful. At the FA's AGM in April, where we outlined the employer's proposals in broad strokes and sought response and direction from you, we gathered your written reactions to the administration's initiatives. We used some of those this past week at the table, conveying to the administration's team your words. You are telling your stories and they are stories about a membership – a community – that knows what it needs, and knows what it doesn't need. The language is strong, lively, empowered ... and empowering. We've included the comments we used in the following pages. And we'll use more of them in the days to come.

The membership is always with us at the table. We invoke you often, and now, in very literal ways, you are right there, sitting beside us telling the stories about the place you come from. As we exchange counter-proposals in the coming weeks and begin the rolled-up sleeves, tough stuff of negotiations, we thank you for the assist, for your confidence and your clarity. Your words "proved the points that needed proving," as Dougie MacLeod puts it, and make real the human interests that are at play in this process. Kudos, and thank you.

*Sharon Myers*

## Where are we now?

As of May 31<sup>st</sup>

FACULTY ASSOCIATION PROPOSAL	BOARD PROPOSAL	STATUS
A-11 Association Rights		Counter from Board, and re-counter by FA May 30
A-13 Release Time for Faculty Association Officers		Counter from Board May 31
	A-15 Correspondence	Signed-off
	B-2 Appointment of Faculty Members	Countered by FA May 4
	B-3 Department Chairs	FA position is this is a matter for the Labour Board, not the table
	B-4 Directors and Coordinators, Interdisciplinary Academic Programs	FA position is this is a matter for the Labour Board, not the table
	B-5 Ranks and Appointments, Librarians	Withdrawn
	B-7 Retirement, Resignation and Termination	Signed-off
C-2 Sabbatical Leave	C-2 Sabbatical Leave	Counter from Employer and re-counter by FA May 4
	C-7 Sick Leave	Signed-off
	C-9 Holidays	Signed-off
	C-13 Exchange Leave	Withdrawn
D-1 Salary	D-1 Salary	No counters; Employer has not yet provided salary scales
	D-2 Administrative Release and Allowances	Implicated by B3 and B4, thus not in play
D-5 Group Benefits		No counter from Employer
D-6 Professional Development and Travel Reimbursement (PDTR)		No counter from Employer
D-9 (New) Tuition Waiver		No counter from Employer
D-10 (New) Health, Wellness and Environment Benefit		No counter from Employer
D-11 (New) Continuing Benefits for Retirees		No counter from Employer
D-12 (New) Pensions		Under negotiation at a separate, multi-union table
	E-1 Evaluation of Teaching and Faculty Review Procedures	Without prejudice counter by FA May 31
	E-2 Tenure and Promotion	Countered by FA May 31

	of Faculty	
	E-3 Teaching Dossier	No counter from FA
	E-4 External Letters of Reference	Countered by FA May 4
	E-5 Review of Librarians	Countered by FA May 30
	E-6 Policies and Procedures for Librarian Review	Countered by FA May 30
	E-7 Permanent Appointment and Promotion of Librarians	Countered by FA May 31
F-5 Term of the Agreement	F-5 Term of the Agreement	Introduced by both teams; will be held in abeyance until final stages of negotiations
	F-6 Discipline	No counter from FA
G-1 Sessional Instructors	G-1 Sessional Instructors	Countered by FA May 4
G-2 Clinical Nursing Instructors		No counter by Employer
H-1 Workload	H-1 Workload	Countered by Employer and re-countered by FA May 26
H-2 Working Conditions		Countered by Employer May 4
I Appendix A Appendix B Appendix C Appendix D	I Appendix A Appendix B Appendix C Appendix D	No proposal from Employer
J MOU Retirement MOU Certification	J MOU Retirement  Schedule A, Certification Order LOU #1, Integrity in Research LOU #2, Canada Research Chair	Signed-off (deletion)

## Telling Your Stories

*Drawn from the written comments at the FA AGM  
and read to the Administration Team  
on May 30, 2012*

- The Employer may be better served by creating an environment where ideas and innovation are encouraged. Where collaboration is the standard. I have heard many times that sometimes we will fail - it happens in this environment. With what has been suggested, it sounds like this will result in "punishment". UPEI is different. What is proposed will make UPEI very, very generic.
- Unbelievable and unthinkable! If we become a place where faculty is shackled and viciously monitored I would have to consider to leave. And I am a member with high merits. Not only are more and more administrative positions (unnecessarily) created and eat our budget, now more and

more of these people see their role in making faculty life miserable and put us on a very short leash and take away personal academic freedom.

- My main concern is the radical reversal of values driving intended decision-making, defining the very nature of UPEI as a university – i.e., instead of academic values reflective of a strong education for UPEI citizens and the local community (and beyond), corporate values (power, control, management) will define and decide academic processes, quality and outcomes. Education is not a matter of business or political governance as its central motivator. The discipline/punish transformation of the academic workplace will devalue teaching and mis-recognize the inseparable relations between research/scholarship and its transference in the learning place through teaching excellence. Faculty will become paranoid and feel shamed for valuing teaching. This is utterly reprehensible.
- These proposals by the Employer are unprecedented and draconian to say the least. This will turn the university academic community from a community of scholars who are trusted to do the utmost as teachers and researchers into a stragglng group of people trying to jump through the hoops of a system based on fear and punishment. Chairs are colleagues, not overseers. They must not be used to turn departments into divided sections of “them and us.” Morale for all faculty will be severely diminished.
- I’m very disturbed by the proposals presented by the administration – it would lead to terrible divisions among the faculty and a tremendous loss of professional freedom. We should do our utmost to make sure that these are never implemented.
- The proposals are unacceptable, although I recognize Employers’ desire to ensure that employees are productive and effective. This is not how to accomplish that in a constructive manner.
- Role of department chairs is indeed awkward in current structure, BUT employer’s proposal is not an improvement! I’m not against fair and equitable evaluation (i.e., improving the review process) BUT not the current proposal. ‘Tightening standards’ is probably inevitable - I hope you can guide it to be a compassionate and humane process. Agree with summary of vision of Chief Negotiator.
- No B.U. #1 member will ever “volunteer” to be a chair under these conditions. As a chair, this responsibility to oversee recommendations on salary and “discipline” are scary! If teaching is used as a way to increase productivity, and those who do not meet the level of scholarly activity required, teaching quality will suffer!
- I think the Employer’s proposals are not reasonable. The basic principles of the collective agreement should not be changed. Managing academic work in the same way as managing labour is not only unfair, but also not effective. Respecting academic staff and encourage creativity is the right way. The problems are not only the articles in the negotiations, but mainly concerns how this university should be led and managed.
- It shows a new level of divide between administration and faculty. If teaching has no value to this institution, let administration say that outright. The productivity model being proposed is naive. It cannot be made on an individual basis without regard to age, discipline, human compassion, etc. Teaching load is too high now ... 8 courses is insane (load must take into account the discipline, dynamic nature of material, number of preps, etc.). Salary as a punishment ... seriously?? Administrators to replace chairs ... do they really understand academic issues on the front lines?
- I am incredibly insulted by the Employer’s proposals, as presented. They call my integrity into question. They ignore the reasons many of us chose to come to a primarily undergraduate

university. If they are implemented, I will be looking for another job at a different university – one that values its faculty and academic staff. Finally, all of the information is in direct opposition to comments made by the President – in both formal and informal gatherings. There appears to be a disconnect that needs to be addressed.

- My colleagues elsewhere who have merit pay don't like it - creates an atmosphere of competition, not cooperation. I want my Chair as a colleague, not a boss. Small departments can't lose the teaching role of the Chair. Some research programs can take a long time before there are measurable outcomes. Some faculty would have difficulty showing the progress for potentially many years. My research is evaluated by my peers, not administrators. We need to equally value scholarly activity and teaching. Colleagues not having much success with research need to be supported, not punished. We went on strike for a reduction from 6 to 5 courses per year. We can't go backwards. If my scholarly productivity matters more, I will be much less willing to spend my time in service to the university. Fewer people would be willing to Chair if they are no longer part of the Faculty Association. I don't want my colleagues to be unhappy with me if I get a grant, present at a conference, or publish my research – and vice versa. Scholarly work varies so much by discipline / subdiscipline - who decides what the appropriate quality and quantity are? If I was rewarded more for productivity, I may be tempted to do less quality work, but more of it. Faculty sometimes go through research slumps and later emerge having great success. This would be eliminated if they are given extra courses to teach. Seems to make teaching as the “bottom of the heap” in terms of what is important. We can't make teaching a PUNISHMENT.
- I am shocked to hear about the little respect that this administration is showing the instructors and librarians at UPEI. It clearly demonstrates that this Administration's vision is a business (private campus) vision and that it does not value what a university really is. “Punishing” faculty members by threatening to withdraw salary and forcing faculty members to undergo a review which will be determined by individuals who may not be equipped to evaluate another scholar's work is shocking. I support the F.A. completely in these negotiations and encourage them as they fight to preserve our rights and shared beliefs.
- I am appalled at the positions put forward by the Admin/Employer negotiating team! They reflect an absolute lack of respect for what we do, for the different kinds of work it takes to keep this profession going, and for us as people dedicated to our jobs and with intellectual and professional integrity; their belief that there is nothing that we can be trusted with seems odd given that we do a heck of a lot of work around here – including teaching! These efforts at micro management and punitive retributions cannot be left to stand! I will most definitely walk for lack of respect and these kinds of regulatory moves on their part. I love my job and I do it damn well! How dare they suggest otherwise about me...about us?! All the goodwill and desire to start anew on the part of the faculty in general – with a new president and other new administrators, is being completely squandered – what a waste of an opportunity for us to come together and build something really good and strong here! Phooey!

## Information for you

The members of your UPEI Faculty Association BU#1 team are: Valerie Campbell, Sessional Instructor, Sociology/Anthropology, Geoffrey Lindsay, English, Andrew Trivett, Engineering, Sharon Myers, History and Wayne Cutcliffe, Auxiliary Member, Computer Science.

Questions, comments, thoughts? We might not be able to provide precise answers or responses at this point in the negotiation process, but give us a try. Contact Sharon Myers at [shmyers@upei.ca](mailto:shmyers@upei.ca) or Betty Jeffery at [bjeffery@upeifa.org](mailto:bjeffery@upeifa.org)

For the FA's policy on decision making during collective bargaining, go to, <http://www.upeifa.org/html/negotiations.html> and click on the link to the policy.

## Coming soon ... to a building near you

Through early July, members of the FA Executive and BU#1 Negotiating Team will be hosting coffee breaks in various buildings on campus.

This is an opportunity to chat about negotiations, catch up on what's happening, ask some questions and engage in the process.

Stay tuned for dates. We hope to see you there.

