



Representing Faculty, Librarians & Veterinarians
& College Faculty

News & Views

May 2017



Collective Agreement Expires June 30, 2017

**(Unit 1 – Faculty,
Librarians & Vets)**

Your negotiation team:

Ed Carter, Chief Negotiator
Herb Kunze, Math & Stats
Mary DeCoste, SOLAL
Ibrahim Deiab, Engineering
**Sue Hubers, Executive
Officer (EO)**
Denise Sanderson, AEO

The current UGFA Unit 1 Collective Agreement (CA) expires on June 30, 2017; the UGFA team led by Chief Negotiator Ed Carter will soon begin to negotiate a new CA with the University. The importance of these negotiations cannot be overstated. The CA is crucial: not only does it determine Members' compensation, it governs their conditions of employment and protects their professional rights. Under labour law, the CA's provisions bind the University, as the employer, and the Members as employees.

Yet during the past year, the UGFA has been increasingly concerned by incidences of management ignoring these provisions OR seeking to strike informal deals with the UGFA to circumvent them.

Examples of the former include: the appointment of a department chair without a proper search process; the hire of a faculty member without the constitution of a proper search committee; multiple failures to recognize Members' Academic Freedom to criticize management decisions, with management instead pursuing disciplinary action to the point of mediation. The UGFA launched Grievances in all of these cases.

A recent example of requests for informal deals is management's proposal to restructure the School of Engineering (SOE). This proposal included changes to the T&P assessment of Members' performance, and the awarding of stipends to "Area Heads" within the SOE: both of these represent violations of the existing CA.

Yet management told the UGFA that we should agree to these changes, outside of regular negotiations, because our Members in the SOE approved the restructuring, and because the changes are crucial for the unit's accreditation. The UGFA then met with our Members in the SOE to determine what they wanted, recognizing that if they wanted the restructuring as presented, then, provided the changes were fair and equitable across campus, the UGFA would consider the proposal. Yet neither of management's assertions proved accurate. The UGFA is very concerned about the stress, excessive workload, and low morale experienced by faculty members in the SOE, and recognizes that management may believe its restructuring proposal will address these issues. But the UGFA is unwilling to approve any alterations to the T&P process, which could have serious ramifications for all Members across campus, outside of regular negotiations. With regard to stipends for "Area Heads," the UGFA pointed out that these new positions are analogous to Associate Chairs in other departments: we suggested that we would be willing to allow such stipends, provided that such a provision was fair and equitable and, therefore, applied to all Associate Chairs across campus. Management was unwilling to consider this.

The SOE is neither the only unit where management appears willing to circumvent the CA, nor the only one suffering from excessive workload. Our Workload Survey in Fall 2016 demonstrated that faculty members' workload has increased all over campus, in all aspects of their duties, and that the most important causes include insufficient numbers of faculty, rising class size, and imposition of new technologies and administrative burdens. The UGFA is particularly worried about the workload of faculty and veterinarians in the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC). In 2013 the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) conducted an investigation of conditions in OVC and identified workload as a major issue, to the point that CAUT considered censuring the University, yet management has failed to address the workload issue. Many Members in OVC have suggested to the UGFA that the college's academic mission, their health, and their continued employment at the University of Guelph are at risk because of excessive workload. The UGFA is currently working with management to carry out a review of the workload in OVC, using an external reviewer; we hope that management will act on its results, despite not acting on the CAUT report.

In order to address the issue of workload, to defend academic rights and due process, and to negotiate a new CA, the UGFA needs your support. In the 2014 round of negotiations, the UGFA was able to reject the punitive concessions and extraordinary take-backs proposed by management because of Members' overwhelming support. As we enter negotiations in June 2017, we will need your support again.

UGFA AGM
Thursday, May 18, 2017
2:00pm THRN 1307

**The UGFA Bargaining principles for 2017
will be presented to the membership for
approval at the AGM.**

Please plan to attend this crucial meeting