



Upcoming UGFA Membership Meetings

Wednesday November 14

11:00 - 12:20 in MacKinnon 117

Friday November 30



12:00 - 2:00 at the Ramada Hotel, Terrace Room (we apologise for moving off-campus; however, there was no room available on-campus.)

UGFA Negotiation Team Receives Unanimous Support Again!!

At the last General Membership Meeting on October 31st, Chief Negotiator Ed Carter provided an update on the status of negotiations and the conciliation process. Towards the end of the meeting, a motion was brought forward to indicate Members' strong support of our Negotiation Team and their efforts. **This motion passed unanimously, signaling that our members strongly support UGFA!!!**

You may ask why this motion is so important. It is important because it signifies that Members are very aware that the only way we can all succeed in negotiations is if we collectively throw our support behind UGFA. It is important because it provides the Negotiation Team with the fuel to continue to work hard for us. Finally, it is important because we all want to move on with doing what we do best; research and education; and strong support by UGFA Members is critical to obtaining a collective agreement that allows us to do our job.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is meant by conciliation?

"Conciliation is a process by which a trade union or an employer can ask the Ministry of Labour for help in resolving their differences so that they can reach a collective agreement. Either party may apply to the Ministry. If parties are in negotiations, conciliation is mandatory in the sense that the parties must use the government's conciliation services before they can get into a position to engage in a strike or lock-out." (from the Ministry of Labour FAQ)

When will the Conciliator arrive?

The Conciliator, Myrna Mann, will be here in late November.

Why do we need a Conciliator?

The Administration has to date been far too slow in providing us with their position. UGFA provided the Administration with our non-financial position on March 19th and our financial proposal in September 17th. While we recently received the Administration's non-monetary articles, we are deeply concerned and disappointed with some of their proposals. At present, a number of these proposals would threaten rights that you already have under our Faculty Policies and Special Plan. Five of the most important rights that we currently see at risk are:

1. Your right to be treated fairly;
2. Your working conditions;
3. Your ownership of intellectual property including course notes;
4. Your treatment during the tenure and promotion process;
5. Your salary while on research and study leave.

Furthermore, we still haven't received the Administration's monetary proposals. Since many of the non-monetary articles (such as research and study leave) are connected to the monetary articles, we can not do anything with these until the Administration discloses their complete package.

The Association is fully committed to achieving a Collective Agreement in an efficient and timely manner. The Conciliator's job is to try to bring both sides together to reach an agreement. Given that we have seen insufficient action by the Administration to suggest that they are equally committed to reaching a timely agreement, we need the Conciliator to help move the process along.

The definition of conciliation mentions strikes and lock-outs - does UGFA want to go on strike?

No! UGFA does not want a strike. We continue to hope that negotiations will lead to an acceptable outcome. We hope that much of what is being proposed by the Administration represents an extreme bargaining position and will be modified as we move towards a settlement, with the Conciliator's help.

So: what happens if the Conciliation process is not successful?

We could find that during the conciliation process, the Administration just does not want to move from their present positions. Given that this is a possibility, we do need to be prepared, in the event that conciliation doesn't work out.

If conciliation were to fail, the Conciliator would most likely file a 'no board' report with the Ministry of Labour. This report essentially indicates that an agreement between the two sides is not forthcoming. If that happens, the Minister will provide a report to both the Administration and UGFA indicating this decision. 17 days after the Minister issues this report, not only is UGFA in the legal position of being able to call a strike, but the Administration is also in the legal position of being able to lock UGFA members out.

How will UGFA prepare for this eventuality?

To prepare for this possible outcome, two key things need to be done very soon. It is important to remember that preparing for this contingency does not mean that it will happen. Similar to how you might prepare for a potentially dangerous winter storm, it is UGFA's duty to be prepared for the potential of a strike or lock-out.

The first thing that we will need to do is to determine if the membership is willing to strike, if conciliation should fail. To do this, we will:

1. Hold a general meeting to ask the membership for permission to hold a 'strike vote'. This is not the time when where you vote on whether to strike. This would simply be a vote to provide UGFA with permission to hold such a vote if necessary. It is anticipated that we will need to do this sometime before the end of November.
2. If the above vote is in favour of permitting a strike vote, then, at some point after that, we may hold a balloted vote, asking members whether they are in favour of striking if necessary. We would select a day and during that day Members would come to the ballot area, where we would confirm membership status, and their vote would be placed in a ballot box.
3. For a strike vote to succeed, the majority of members who vote (via ballot) must indicate that they are willing to strike if necessary.

The second thing that we need to do is to compile a list of member information, such as contact information that is maintained by UGFA, separate from the university's systems. It is very important that we do this, even if we decide that we do not want to strike. Why? Because 17 days after the "no-board" report is issued by the Minister (as per above), the Administration could legally lock us out. If this were to happen, we would need to be able to contact all members outside of the university's communications system.

How and when will UGFA gather this information?

Very soon, we will be sending out a paper survey to all of our members, requesting this information. We would really appreciate it if you could complete and return this survey as quickly as possible so that we are prepared.

If we hold a strike vote, why is it important to have a high turnout and strong majority?

Striking, though not something that anyone wants to do, is a tool that we can use to force the Administration to negotiate in a fair and timely manner. If we have a very weak majority of members in favour of striking, then that signals to the Administration that our membership is split on UGFA's position. In other words, if the results of a strike vote indicate no support or weak support for striking, then striking no longer becomes a tool that we can use. Therefore it is really important that, if Members give UGFA permission to hold a strike vote, we are united in support for carrying through with it.

If we strike or are locked out, will we still receive our pay?

If we do have to strike, or are locked out, then, during this time, you will not receive your usual pay from the University. We do have strike pay to assist members during this time. If the strike should last beyond 3 days, then on the fourth day you will start to receive strike pay of \$77/ day payable every two weeks. In order to receive this strike pay you must be participating in the strike, whether on picket duty, at headquarters or some other function as assigned by the UGFA. This is why we will need to receive from you information on what you are prepared to do.

Are we planning on updating students about this situation?

On Monday November 12th, Glen Filson, Ed Carter, Susan Hubers and Scott Colwell met with Derek Pieper, president of the Central Students Association, and Michael Schumaker, president of the Graduate Students Association. During this meeting Ed, Sue and Glen provided Derek and Michael with an update on where we are to date. We also agreed to arrange an information session with the Student Executive Council and the CSA and GSA executive before the end of this month.

Volunteers Needed:

At this point in time, there are many questions to which UGFA Members need quick responses. In order to facilitate this, we are looking for one or two volunteer per department to act as a “go-to” person. If you are willing and able to help out please contact the UGFA office.

Please Contact Us:

We will be providing you with more information very shortly. In the meantime, please contact UGFA by e-mail (*facassoc@uoguelph.ca*), in person (*Room 535, University Centre*), or by phone (ext. 52126) with any questions you have.

Remember, our UGFA website has moved and can now be found at <http://www.caut.ca/ugfa>

You may also wish to contact the President and the Board of Governors to express your concerns.

“I Support UGFA” Banner:

To show our visual support of UGFA, we have created the attached coloured 3’x10’ “I SUPPORT UGFA” banner. We would like to encourage as many Members as possible to display this on your office door to show the Administration where we stand.