

Mount Allison Faculty Association

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1. Opening Statement and Negotiations Thus Far

- Most but not all opening positions have been presented at the Negotiation Table — the rest are expected soon.

2. MAFA's Initial Proposals

- Leave and release replacements; conversion of stipends into contracts
- Changing the standard teaching load in Arts and Social Science
- Collegial rights in the hiring of administrators
- Compensation, pension and benefits, as at comparable universities
- Various proposals to improve benefits, e.g., improved participation in the pension plan and health plans, improved tuition waivers for dependents. . .

3. Employer's Initial Proposals

- Change to T&P Committee and Procedures
- Change to agreement not to employ non-members in operation of library
- Across-the-board (ATB) salary changes: below inflation and without catch-up to comparators
- No proposals for leave replacements nor any proposals to respond to issues rising from reduced complement

1. Opening Statement

Explanation: In some rounds of negotiation, it is the practice of the Chief Negotiators to make an opening statement to explain or characterize their proposals or priorities in the upcoming round of bargaining. The text below is a paraphrased version (tidied up for readability) of the statement delivered on June 25th by MAFA Chief Negotiator, Stephen Law.

“A better direction”

Now that we have introduced the members of MAFA’s Negotiating Team, it is important to say that we are at this Table as the representatives of a diverse group of people with a common reason as to why we are at the university: we all are part of a community of scholars. Each of us has an allegiance to an intellectual discipline. That allegiance to that discipline is key to our identities and explains why we are at this university. We’re hired from a national and international market and most of us ended up here because at the time we entered that market Mount Allison was one of the universities hiring at that time in the field we were in. This is key to understanding what kind of community we represent. What we do in our lives is the teaching, research and service specific to each of our disciplines informed by our disciplinary perspectives. We feel we have a calling, not just a job. We are professionals. As a result, by the way, we think of the people you represent from Centennial Hall as administrators, not as managers.

Our view is that there is a core set of people that we need with us (colleagues) in order to accomplish the goals we have. We have some concerns about the dwindling number of our colleagues, the workload that results from that decline, and the balance that needs to be reached. We think this is key to continued smooth functioning of the institution and needs to be addressed. We’re going to bring a range of proposals to try to help improve terms and conditions related to the number of colleagues, and the resulting workload balance between teaching, research, and service.

Teaching is important. This is a student-focused university where students thrive because of the small size and community. Research and service are key. Universities are a special gift humans give to themselves. They are a place where people take as much time as needed to “get it right”. Although we could point to a time when conditions were even worse than now, we can imagine better. We have a set of proposals we think will shift things in a better direction.

Negotiations Thus Far

The Employer’s negotiating team includes: Neil MacEachern (Director of Facilities Management) as Chief Negotiator, along with Katherine DeVere-Pettigrew (Director of Human Resources), Nauman Farooqi (Dean of Social Science), and Chris Milner (Budget Manager). We have had four meetings so far. The first meeting was held June 13th; the fourth on June 27th. We have met for a total of six hours. The tone has been professional and not obstructive. We have discussed and agreed upon a *Protocol for Negotiations*. Each side has presented an *Opening Statement*, a *List of Articles to Open*, and by the end of next week we expect that we will have exchanged initial proposals or held initial discussions for all opened Articles.

Process issues have been dealt with smoothly. We have agreed on a meeting plan for the rest of July with another nine meetings already scheduled.

Four Articles are already agreed: the length of the contracts for the Full-time and Part-time Agreements will be three years. Thus, Article 40 in each Collective Agreement has already been “signed-off”. In addition, we have agreed that Family Day is now a holiday in New Brunswick which settles Article 27 in each Collective Agreement.

We have spent some time making changes to the language of both contracts to remove pronouns such as “his/her” and “she/he” to ensure the Agreements are written in gender-neutral language. The changes are meant to leave unchanged the effect of the Clauses. All of the necessary changes have now been agreed except for some small issues to be resolved in Articles 1 and 23.

The Employer Team indicated that they would be unavailable for meetings from July 1st to July 12th. Negotiations resume July 16th.

2. MAFA’s Proposals

In this round MAFA is negotiating its twelfth full-time collective agreement and sixth part-time agreement. Our proposals are based on what we and the Collective Bargaining Committee heard from members. To address the widespread concern with member workload, we are making proposals on the minimum full-time faculty and librarian complement, as well as replacements for sabbatical and other leaves. This includes more frequent replacement for single course releases.

Along with more colleagues, MAFA members are seeking a re-balancing of workloads. For the Arts and Social Sciences, we have proposed a standard teaching load equal to that in Science. Across the campus, MAFA is seeking improved course credit for honours supervisions and reading courses.

We remain aware of the need to try to catch up with our comparators in salary terms and we are reluctant to lose ground particularly with respect to our purchasing power since this has implications for recruitment and retention of faculty and librarians. MAFA is proposing salary scale increases of 3%, 4%, and 5% over the next three years, the same increases as agreed for the 2007-2010 contract (but in reverse order). These increases would apply to both full-time and part-time compensation.

MAFA has a number of proposals to address the difficulty that many departments have in filling positions for the teaching of courses when they have only part-time stipends to offer. The first of these is a proposal for a process that could empower departments that have been offered numerous stipends to bundle them into a full-time sessional/term appointment. The second proposal is a new category of employment under the part-time agreement which we have called a “Part-time Fellow.” A Part-time Fellow would teach between one and three courses based on a salary proportional to a full-time appointee on the salary scale at either the Lecturer or Assistant range. The Part-time Fellow would receive proportional professional expense funding, pension and other benefits where applicable. When a department needs staff to teach one or two courses and cannot attract someone to do so on stipend, the department could recommend that the Employer staff those courses through the mechanism of the Part-time Fellow. The option of creating this kind of position would be a flexible response to some hiring problems seen recently at the university. MAFA’s has proposed that on a trial basis there should be two Part-time Fellows appointed in each of the three Faculties each academic year.

The vast majority of part-time members will continue to work under the stipendiary system, so we are also making proposals to improve their terms and conditions of work. These include seeking better

compensation for relocation expenses, an expanded first right of appointment, adding compensation for courses with studio and tutorial components, enrolment-responsive remuneration (more compensation for bigger classes), an increase in the number of research stipends, and better access to professional expense reimbursement.

We seek additional research days and carry over of these days for librarians, along with the establishment of the CLCA positions for part-time librarians with first right of appointment.

MAFA has also heard from members that we need to strengthen our collegial rights at this institution. We are making a specific proposal to support open searches for academic administrators. We are seeking improvements in the process of external reviews of departments and programs.

We have proposed more flexible options for phased retirement and using accumulated sabbatical time as retirement leave. We have also proposed increases to benefits after retirement.

For faculty who supervise graduate students, there is generally an expectation that they will cover student tuition out of their grant funding and support students to attend professional conferences. Recently, the university drastically increased tuition for graduate students, increasing the burden on faculty who supervise graduate students. We are proposing a Grad Supervision Reimbursement to partially offset the costs to faculty who supervise graduate students.

For the health benefit plans, we have proposed a supplementary health spending account, in addition to the standard benefits. We have also requested that employees be given access to the “Best Doctors” program. There is also a proposal for the creation of a Transgender Transition Fund to cover the costs of gender-affirming treatments that are not currently covered by NB Medicare.

We are proposing several changes and updates for Article 11 on accommodation for disabilities and chronic and episodic conditions. These proposals improve the language to more accurately reflect the realities of living with disabilities and chronic illnesses and are more in line with current thinking on accommodations.

Finally, we are seeking improvements that are of special interest to a variety of members, such as improvement in reimbursements for child care, greater participation in the pension plan and access to tuition waivers.

Please feel free to arrange to come down to the MAFA office to look over the proposals.

3. Employer proposals

The Employer indicated they would be opening 20 Articles during this round of bargaining — 16 Articles from the Full Time agreement and 4 Articles in the Part Time agreement – some of them for housekeeping changes. The details of most of these proposals have now been discussed at the bargaining table and while some appear to be changes in dates, clause numbers or terminology, other changes involve extensive revisions. In the Part Time Agreement, all of the changes are contingent on changes made in the Full Time Agreement. Aside from parallel changes, the Employer has no other proposed changes for the Part Time Agreement. In the Full Time Agreement, there have been a number of issues raised in the proposals described below.

- The Employer seeks a change to the definition of Dean, one effect of which would be to remove references to the Director of the RJCBS but the new definition would also permit the addition of future Directors and Dean-like administrators to the list of Deans (Articles 1, 17, and 23).
- They propose a change to the language regarding the agreement not to employ non-members in the operation of the library (Article 12).
- The Employer has proposed that the Provost will choose a specific T&P Committee for each candidate from a pool of elected faculty members and appointed Deans. The pool must include at least one full professor from each Faculty (Article 17)
- There is a proposal to require letters of discipline to remain in official files to go before the T&P Committee Articles (13, 17, 20, and 35).
- The Employer is also proposing that Departmental or Library letters to T&P will have their comments extracted, aggregated, and re-assembled before being shown to candidates (Articles 17 and 20).
- The Employer appears to be seeking to seriously curtail job protection and benefits for members who are disabled or living with chronic or episodic illness (Article 25).
- The Employer's monetary proposals for Article 30 are for increases of 1.00%, 1.00% and 1.25% in the salary scale ceiling each year over the three years. This also applies to the part-time stipend.

Your Negotiating Team

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