

UWOFA Librarians and Archivists Bargaining Bulletin

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LIBRARIANS AND ARCHIVISTS NEGOTIATIONS UPDATE

Your Negotiating Team has responded to draconian positions taken by the Employer by applying for conciliation with the Labour Board. The Employer has insisted on language in the Responsibilities of Members article that would essentially eliminate the job security of all UWOFA-LA Members. The proposed language in this article would also have deleterious implications for Reassignment and Workload.

The Employer's position was discussed at length at the UWOFA-LA General Meeting, August 17. At that meeting, attended by close to 60% of the Bargaining Unit, Members unanimously resolved that this article was "absolutely unacceptable." Peter Simpson, CAUT Assistant Executive Director, called it "the worst language we at CAUT have ever seen tabled for librarians and archivists in Canada." In response to Membership concerns, your Negotiating Team tabled its intention to file for conciliation with the Employer on August 18.

We have not broken off negotiations. They will continue as scheduled. According to the application form for the appointment of a conciliator: "Section 18 of the Act requires that the Minister appoint a conciliation officer on the request of either party where notice to bargain has been given. There is no requirement that the parties exhaust the negotiation process prior to requesting a conciliation appointment." Indeed, it is the belief of your Negotiating Team that the request for conciliation will help focus discussions and support efforts to bring about an equitable settlement.

In the conciliation process, a facilitator appointed by the Ontario Ministry of Labour acts as a broker between the opposing parties in order to restore communication and ultimately reach a settlement. The process is non-binding, but is required by provincial law before a strike or a lock-out. If conciliation fails, the parties must wait seventeen days before engaging legally in a strike or a lock-out. For more about strikes, see the Strike 101 Bargaining Bulletin (http://www.uwofa.ca/@storage/files/documents/205/lab2_3.pdf).

The Association has now tabled all of our proposed articles, including our proposals for compensation and benefits. This is both an attempt to move along negotiations, and an effort to make sure that the conciliator can address all issues of concern. Members are again reminded of our poor position relative to others (see the Salary Bargaining Bulletin <http://www.uwofa.ca/@storage/files/documents/163/lab22.pdf>). Out of all ARL libraries, Western's median salaries rank 91 out of 113, and lowest of all Canadian ARL members (see the ARL Annual Salary Survey 2007-2008, <http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/ss07.pdf>, page 33).

In addition to the draconian language in the Responsibilities of Members article, work on other articles, including Annual Report & Review, Workload, Promotion and Continuing Appointment, and Reassignment, is nearing an impasse. Again, your Negotiating Team believes that the request for conciliation will help resolve these roadblocks.

In the coming weeks, Negotiating Team members will be meeting with individual Units to make sure everyone is informed about these issues and that all Members have a chance to ask any questions about the negotiations and the conciliation process. If you have any immediate concerns, feel free to contact Aniko Varpalotai, Chief Negotiator (aniko@uwo.ca) or Linda Dunn, Deputy Chief Negotiator (ldunn@uwo.ca).

The following is an overview of negotiations to date:

Interim Sign-Offs	
Alternative Workload Association Rights Education Assistance Exchange Leave Income Security Information Joint Committee	Leave of Absence Official File Privacy *Professional Expense Reimbursement Reduced Responsibility Use of Facilities <i>*Financial aspects still to be negotiated</i>
Letters of Understanding	
Nominations & Elections	Discrimination & Harassment (Deferred) Employment Equity (under consideration as a Letter of Understanding)
Articles in Active Negotiations	
Annual Report & Review Appointments Child and Family Care Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment Copies of the Agreement Library Directors & Dept. Heads	Professional Leave Promotion & Continuing Appointment Reassignment Responsibilities of Members *Working Conditions Workload <i>*Financial aspects still to be negotiated</i>
Financial Articles	
Compensation and Benefits Duration of the Agreement	*Education Leave *Retirement & Resignation *Vacations & Holidays <i>*Financial aspects still to be negotiated</i>