

# ***your* UWOFA Librarians and Archivists Bargaining Bulletin**

---

Volume 2, No. 1

July 2008

Our current Collective Agreement expires a year from now on June 30, 2009.

The collective bargaining or negotiating process requires careful and extensive preparation. Our Contract Committee is already working to gather information in order to develop bargaining proposals for non-salary aspects of our Collective Agreement. Salary Committee preparations are also underway.

## **How did we benefit from Collective Bargaining the first time around?**

We won numerous gains in our first Collective Agreement, many of them significant:

- Academic status
- Academic freedom
- Removal of salary caps
- Establishment of Ranks and corresponding base salaries
- Grievance & Arbitration mechanisms
- Improved job security (reassignment vs severance)
- Alternative workload
- Increased access to Reduced Responsibility arrangements
- New Academic Activity Leave
- Pregnancy Leave salary 'top up' benefit increased from 17 to 24 weeks
- Increased input into decision-making (Unit Workload Plan; Promotion & Continuing Appointment Committee, etc.)
- More vacation (extra 2 days)
- Emeritus/Emerita status and accompanying privileges
- Desk telephones for all Members to improve working conditions

## **Where did we have to compromise with the first Collective Agreement?**

### **Examples include:**

- Salaries remain too low – well below established Ontario market value.
- Little progress with our benefits, which are not on par with Faculty (Health Care Spending Account; child and family care privileges, *etc.*)
- Employer contributions to our pension plan not being on par with Faculty. Further, the employer contribution percentage is lowest in the critical early career phase - a serious problem.
- A cut from previous PMA annual travel support. However, new Personal Expense Reimbursement and Travel Expense Reimbursement allocations can be 'carried forward' until the last March 30<sup>th</sup> before the contract expiry date to finance conference attendance – such as the ACRL conference beginning March 19, 2009 in Seattle.
- FIMS teaching earnings being ineligible for pension contributions.
- Only a modest amount of Academic Activity Leave (vs. Sabbatical Leave)

### **When will the second round of negotiations begin?**

Under the Ontario Labour Relations Act, either party may give “Notice of Desire to Bargain” during the ninety days preceding the expiry of a collective agreement, and the other party must then reply to this notice within 15 days, unless a later start date is mutually acceptable. Negotiations may be begun sooner – or later – by mutual agreement.

UWOFA-LA asked UWO Administration to extend our existing UWOFA-LA Collective Agreement by one year to harmonize with the Faculty Collective Agreement expiry date of June 30, 2010. This harmonization could facilitate amalgamation to a single UWOFA Bargaining Unit. Our Administration’s insistence on separate Bargaining Units for Faculty and for Librarians and Archivists is an abnormal arrangement; every other unionized Canadian University has a single Bargaining Unit comprising both Faculty, Archivists and Librarians.

Unfortunately, there is not yet a definitive answer on approving extension of our current Collective Agreement to 2010. As a result, we have begun preparations to ready ourselves for 2009 negotiations next summer.

It is predictable that the Administration will resist further gains for Members during the upcoming collective bargaining process. It is important to note that enhancements may not be won easily.

### **What happens next?**

Your participation is crucial!

Please continue to make a special effort to attend all UWOFA-LA General Meetings. Becoming as well-informed as possible is important preparation for the discussions and decisions that lie ahead of us. General Meetings provide a vital forum in which to clarify and discuss important issues and express personal thoughts and opinions. They also serve an educational role by helping to familiarize Members with the full meaning and implications of various Articles in the existing Collective Agreement.

Remember the need for active preparation to make tough decisions that will directly affect our future working lives, and beyond.

There is still time to **COMPLETE THE MEMBERS’ PRIORITIES FEEDBACK SURVEY!** Jane Laforge emailed the link to this survey on June 19<sup>th</sup>.

**If you have ideas about what our Bargaining goals should be**, please pass them on the Contract Committee co-Chairs, Linda Dunn ([ldunn@uwo.ca](mailto:ldunn@uwo.ca) or ext. 86371) and Elizabeth Bruton ([ebruton@uwo.ca](mailto:ebruton@uwo.ca) or ext. 88274).