

# UWOFA Librarians and Archivists Bargaining Bulletin

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## UWOFA-LA to hold strike vote

On the recommendation of your negotiating team, UWOFA's Board of Directors has authorized a strike vote to be held on October 21 and 22. The vote will take place prior to the conciliation process, which begins on Oct. 27 with Ministry of Labour appointed conciliator Greg Long.

### Why call a strike vote?

At this point in the negotiating process, a strong strike vote is a tool that will give your negotiating team more leverage at the table during conciliation; a strike authorization demonstrates to the administration that the membership is behind their negotiating team. Put simply, voting "yes" expresses support for the team and their efforts to negotiate the best possible deal, while voting "no" effectively signals that you wish the team to accept what is currently on offer from the administration. Voting "yes" **does not** mean that there will automatically be a strike. Your negotiating team is committed to reaching a deal with the administration during conciliation.

### When, Where and How to Vote

Please bring your university ID card or another piece of photo identification with you to the poll.

- Wednesday, October 21, 9 am – 3 pm, Social Science Building (second floor lobby)
- Thursday, October 22, 9 am – 3 pm, UWOFA office (Elborn College, Room 2120)

### What are the issues?

As previously mentioned in the September 15 Bargaining Bulletin, progress has been made at the table on issues including, but not limited to, employment equity, discrimination and harassment, and grievance and arbitration. However, we have since received all of the employer's initial proposals and there are obstacles in the way of achieving a fair and equitable collective agreement that reflects the membership's bargaining priorities. Those issues include compensation and benefits, job security, promotion and continuing appointment, and phased retirement.

#### *Compensation and Benefits*

The administration has offered a 1% scale increase per year for four years. Given the fact that librarians and archivists at Western are already paid on average about 16% less than their counterparts at other Ontario universities, our salaries are sure to fall even further behind if the administration's offer is accepted. Meanwhile, Western enjoys robust financial health. According to its draft 2015 financial statements, the university posted a \$76.2-million surplus in the past fiscal year. Investments also rose to \$1.352 billion, representing an increase of \$175 million over the previous year. Western should be properly investing in its core mission of teaching and research, in which academic librarians and archivists play a central role.

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### *Restructuring and Job Security*

As previously mentioned at last week's UWOFA-LA General Meeting, the administration has proposed to delete the listing of library units in the collective agreement, thereby asking for total flexibility to restructure Western Libraries. UWOFA sees value in an evolving library system, as our recent video series clearly shows. But the administration has not provided any assurances that such anticipated restructuring will not have adverse effects on members. For example, if there are no library units, what will this mean for directors and heads? There are still many unanswered questions.

Please vote "yes" to support your negotiating team in next week's strike vote.

