

Lead Negotiator's report – April 2023

Collective Agreement signing

The 22-25 collective agreement was signed on April 24th, after an extremely protracted document preparation process. We have asked the Employer to ensure that we do not go through such a difficult process again, especially as the normal process of giving us a track change document has been used for years and is comparatively quick to do (2-3 hours). We have done our best to catch as many issues as possible (there were 1000+ differences between the two documents) but encourage any members to communicate anything they spot to the Union Office.

We have been by HR told that SMUFU members should receive their back pay on May 18.

While I have presented this list before, I'd just like to remind everyone of the major advances we made around working conditions for multiple groups within the CA. We obviously didn't get everything, in particular the problems around lab compensation remain a very significant issue, but nonetheless these are significant improvements.

Recap on CA updates

List of key improvements in 22-25 CA:

- Statement on Indigenous knowledge in definitions of scholarship
- 1-year sabbatical for lecturers now agreed
- Senior lecturer table steps will now go up to 13 (increased from 8)
- Lecturers are now eligible for overload
- Minor improvement on librarian vacation for long-serving members
- Librarian off-campus working arrangements determined
- LTA have additional paid "preparation" period in contract (1 month on 8-month contract)
- LTAs added to the new combined travel/PD fund at pro-rated amount
- 3+3 Equity (cohort) hire program
- Large grad program coordinators now eligible for administrative leave
- Chairs of departments with 30+ faculty get additional stipend
- Associate University Librarian appointment now defined
- Combined travel/PD into single fund for more flexibility
- Recognition of office hours being in response to mode of course delivery
- Schedule D, (early retirement) maximum amount increases from \$270,000 to \$330,000
- Overload payments now have minimum scales determined by Assistant/Associate/Full rank which interface to 3912 experience lists (MoU on this for lecturers to be signed)

Concessions

- Loss of Schedule E (normal retirement incentive brought in when mandatory retirement was repealed) at the end of the agreement, last applications will be in Spring 2025.
- Teaching at other institutions of courses equivalent to a 0.5 FCE taught at SMU must be approved by VPAR, and reported in annual report (not sabbatical).
- Repudiation of position if you hold two full time faculty positions simultaneously without permission from the VPAR.

Other changes of note

We have changed some of the departmental hiring processes and encourage departmental Chairs and hiring committees to ensure that they are aware. This is most relevant to job screening criteria. There is also a small change around conflict-of-interest discussions, individuals are encouraged (but not forced) to talk about them if unsure. "President" has been changed to "President or designate" in a few places.

Search for a new Lead Negotiator

Having been in the role for four years and negotiated two agreements as well as fighting against attempts to open lay-off provisions (Article 23) I have decided to step down as Lead Negotiator on July 1. I have given thoughts to the SMUFU President on possible replacements. I have told the Executive I will continue to offer advice should they want it. I want to say that I very much appreciate all the times people have stopped me in the corridor to pass on thanks, and I want to underline again that negotiations are fundamentally a collective effort.

Thank you, it has been an honour to serve.