Discussing U of R Academic Bargaining With Your Students – FAQ’s

U of R Academic Members have the right to speak openly with their students about U of R Academic bargaining and the bargaining process.

The following are answers to some questions that your students might have about the status of bargaining and the strike mandate given to the bargaining team by the membership last October.

It is vital that only the facts are communicated to avoid the spread of misinformation among the student population. If a student asks a question that you do not know the answer to, say you will follow up with them and contact URFA for more information.

I’ve heard that our professors, sessionals, instructors and librarians are going on strike. Is this true?

There are currently no plans for a strike.

Professors, sessionals, instructors and librarians have voted in favour of a strike mandate, but the University of Regina Faculty Association, which represents the professors, sessionals, instructors and librarians at the University of Regina, remain committed to the bargaining process with the University Administration. Our goal is always to negotiate a fair and reasonable collective agreement with the University Administration that recognizes and values the crucial role that we play in supporting students at the University.

Why did professors, sessionals, instructors, and librarians vote for a strike?

We did not vote for a strike. We voted to give our bargaining team a mandate to call a strike if necessary. No one wants to go on strike. We prefer to be in the classroom and working with students than on a picket line. Our goal is always to reach a fair and reasonable collective agreement without impacting students.
What is the difference between going on strike and achieving a strike mandate?

A vote in favour of a strike does not necessarily mean there will be a strike or job action. Instead, the vote in favour of a strike mandate is a signal to the University Administration that your professors, sessionals, instructors and librarians are unhappy with the proposals that have been put forward. It is a push for the University Administration to bring forward proposals that will result in a fair and reasonable collective agreement without impacting students.

What do professors, sessionals, instructors and librarians want?

Job security for sessional instructors. Sessional instructors are vital to the university. Last year, sessionals taught approximately 50% of all undergraduate courses at the U of R. Currently, sessionals have to reapply to teach every semester and never know for sure if they will have a job from one semester to the next.

More full time faculty to teach students.

Protecting the academic mission of the university by ensuring the University remains dedicated to building the capacity of academic staff to do groundbreaking research.

Improving students’ learning environment. This includes a fair ratio of faculty-to-students that ensures a quality learning environment for students while building the capacity for academic staff to do research, as well as increasing supports for the development of courses and increased supports for student accommodations.

Is it true that professors, sessionals, instructors and librarians are seeking a major pay increase?

No. Professors, sessionals, instructors and librarians are simply seeking fair compensation that keeps pace with the rate of inflation. We are more concerned about increasing job security, building research capacity, increasing fairness for faculty, and improving the quality of the student’s learning environment at the University than seeking a major pay increase.

Will the university increase my tuition if faculty get a pay increase?

The University has raised tuition every year for the last decade, even in years where some University employees have taken 0% wage increases. It is possible that tuition will increase again whether or not academic staff receive a pay increase.
What happens to my studies if there is a strike?

It is always our goal to reach a fair and reasonable collective agreement without disrupting students. However, in the event of a strike, it will be up to the University to develop a plan for students to complete their studies. Strikes at universities and colleges have happened across Canada and it is very rare for students to not complete their studies. In the event of a strike, specific questions about the University’s plans should be directed to the University Administration.

How can students support U of R Academic Staff?

Please discuss this with your friends, family and fellow students. Tell your professors, sessionals, instructors and librarians that you support them. Look for the “Bargaining Update” tables across campus and stop by and show your support by picking up a button.