Bargaining Update: U of R Academic Staff

March 18, 2019
Recent Timeline

- March 4, 5, 11, and 12 – Conciliation
- March 12 – Conciliation ends at the recommendation of the conciliator with ‘final’ packages exchanged
- March 13 – Conciliator’s report was filed with the Ministry of Labour

You are Here: March 18 (today) – Townhall meeting

- March 20th – Student Townhall hosted by Rpirg
- March 22nd – 48 hour job action notice served
- March 25th – Bargaining scheduled with university administration
- March 26th – Bargaining scheduled with university administration
- March 27th 24:00 - 14 day cooling off period ends –
- March 28th – U of R Academic Staff Members are in a legal Job Action position
Job Action

- Full Strike
- Picket Lines
- Withholding Labour
- Job Action
Our Objectives – Long Term Health of U of R

• Improve transparency,
• Ensure decisions regarding career progress and hiring are not arbitrary,
• Defend U of R’s research mission,
• Provide opportunities to improve instruction,
• Maintain pay at current levels, and
• Pensions are better than ad hoc early retirement packages.
Agreements on

• Modifying the merit system,
• Benefits (flex spending, PAT),
• Alternate review system for senior ranks,
• Priority and review system for sessionals,
• A lot of other details.
Primary concerns

• The offer looks pretty good, I’ve only read TC’s email – Why won’t the negotiators accept the final offer?
  • We believe we can do better. There is nothing on pension, weak pay, little acknowledgement of the research mission.
  • It’s not good, it’s just less horrible.

• Why can’t we just vote?
  • If the university administration thought this was a good offer they’d require a vote on it.
  • They do not believe that the membership will support their final proposals.

• Representing the entire membership in bargaining.
  • All academic staff members are part of this bargaining unit – this includes sessionals.
  • URFA and the bargaining team represents the entire membership.
  • Sessionals deliver half of the courses. Is 50% of courses the right use?
  • Together we are stronger.
Outstanding Issues/URFA Proposals

1. Article 5 – Academic Planning
   • Instructor Ratio – willful violation and no real support for the research mission.
   • Our solution is ZERO financial cost to the university.
2. Article 10 – Information
   • This Article remains open because URFA is proposing a reporting system on the Faculty/Student ratio.
3. Article 23 – Benefit Provisions
   • Pension—we’re asking for 1% more (matched by you).
4. Article 28 – Duration and Continuance of the Agreement
   • This Article remains open, however, both parties have limited discussions to a four (4) year term for the agreement.
5. Appendix A – Compensation
   • Salaries— we are paid less than our comparators. We aren’t asking to close that gap. We’re asking that we slow the rate at which we fall behind.
The Way Forward

• Back to the table (March 25\textsuperscript{th} and 26\textsuperscript{th})
• A new idea on addressing inequity in sessional pay
• Hopeful for engagement with instructor-ratio
• We aren’t that far apart on compensation (Only about the equivalent of 4 to 5 provosts).
Financial Positions

Academic staff at other comprehensive universities with contracts ratified in the last two years have made gains comparable to our proposed year-over-year increases (see Table 2).

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The U of R Administration</th>
<th>URFA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0% Salary</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0% Salary</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.75% Salary</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjustment to Lecturer Salary Scale</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add one step to the top and drop one from the bottom of each rank's scale</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2% Salary</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Financial Positions

• The administration’s final proposal also includes two lump-sum payments on ratification; $1,900 just for permanent academic staff members and $1,000 for permanent academic staff members and select sessionals. These payments will have no lasting impact on salaries making them of much smaller financial value.

• In the Administration’s final proposal, sessionals would not receive the lump sum payment of $1,900.

• The $1000 signing bonus is only for actively employed sessionals. If ratification is in spring or summer, the vast majority of sessionals would not receive the signing bonus.

• In earlier bargaining sessions both sides have tentatively agreed to increasing the Family Tuition Scholarship, increasing the flexible spending account, and parental leave top-up for full-time-equivalent sessionals.
# Financial Positions

## Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University* (year ratified)</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carleton (2018)</td>
<td>2% (+$1350)</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guelph (2018)</td>
<td>1.25%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurier (2017)</td>
<td>1.25% (+$800)</td>
<td>1.25% (+$600)</td>
<td>1.25% (+$400)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor (2018)</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>1.75%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York (2018)</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Our comparators are the McLean’s Comprehensive Universities: Brock, Carleton, Concordia, Guelph, Laurier, Memorial, New Brunswick, Ryerson, SFU, UQAM, Victoria, Waterloo, Windsor, and York.*
Fact-Checking the Provost

Provost:

“In recent years, due to a slowing economy, the public sector has gone through challenging times, and the University has had to adjust to that reality. We anticipate a similar reality in the coming year with regard to funding. In that context, salary and benefit increases are difficult to afford.”
Fact-Checking the Provost

URFA’s Response:
• Provost Chase’s depiction of the provincial economic reality is out of date.
• Saskatchewan is forecasted to be among top GDP performers in Canada.
• The university administration appears to have little difficulty making 40-year commitments to bricks and mortar despite (in Provost Thomas Chase’s words) “the fiscal constraints we face.”

Budget and allocations are choices. URFA’s priority is to invest in people.
Fact-Checking the Provost

Provost:

“[The University’s proposal] includes an automatic increment for all academic staff members, a one-time $1,900 lump sum payment, a $1,000 signing bonus and a $12,000 professional development fund for sessional lecturers, along with all other benefit improvements already agreed to at the bargaining table.”
Fact-Checking the Provost

URFA’s Response:

• The Provost implies that the offer will benefit ALL URFA members. This is not true.
• Sessionals would receive neither the automatic increment nor the $1,900 lump sum payment. In addition, the increments are reserved for permanent academic staff members at the bottom or top of their pay scale.
• The $1,000 signing bonus would be paid to actively-employed sessionals; however, a ratification date during the spring/summer would mean that only a small number of sessionals in the bargaining unit would be actively employed.
• The “$12,000 professional development fund for sessional lecturers” was offered in the University’s final offer, but this was hard-won during bargaining, and a proposal that the University had consistently rejected until their final offer, and only upon URFA’s agreement to administer the funds.
• The Provost’s message fails to mention the fact that the University’s position rejects pay equity and recognition for hours worked for sessional lecturers, a position that has been reinforced over several contracts.
Fact-Checking the Provost

Provost:
“[…O]ver the past year we settled four-year and five-year contracts with APT (Administrative, Professional and Technical), CUPE 5791 (Administration, Trades, Technical and Custodial) and CUPE 2419 (Teaching Assistants) for between 3% and 7% increases. In each of the first two years of the three contracts, increases were 0%; all contracts also included one-time lump sum payments.”
Fact-Checking the Provost

URFA’s response:

• The University's team has consistently compared our academic membership to other labour groups on campus and within the province; we adamantly disagree with these comparisons. URFA recognizes the valuable contributions of our APT and CUPE colleagues; however, academic staff are not drawn from a local or even provincial labour pool.

• Academic staff at other comprehensive universities with contracts ratified in the last two years have made gains comparable to our proposed year-over-year increases.
Fact-Checking the Provost

Provost:

• “From the URFA bargaining team we accepted a number of proposals that will substantially benefit academic staff and sessional lecturers. [...] The difference between the standard Federal Employment Insurance Benefits and 90 per cent of the average weekly earnings from a previous 52 weeks for a maximum of 36 weeks. This is a major benefit for sessionals, who previously had no top up funding.”
Fact-Checking the Provost

URFA’s Response:

• This parental leave top-up is only available for full-time-equivalent sessionals, and was a hard win that only came after a strong strike mandate.

• We calculate that an average of 0.6 sessionals will access this benefit per year.
Fact-Checking the Provost

Provost:

• “From the URFA bargaining team, we accepted a number of proposals that will substantially benefit academic staff and sessional lecturers [such as] Enhanced Group Insurance, Dental, Optical and Extended Health benefits for sessionals, who have been employed for 26 consecutive weeks and have worked 780 hours or more”.

Fact-Checking the Provost

URFA’s response:

- This gain for full-time-equivalent sessionals was not something given by the University. It is simply in compliance with the Saskatchewan Employment Act.
Fact-Checking the Provost

Provost:

“Throughout the negotiating process, our focus has been on students. We are striving to limit tuition and fee increases. We have tried to reach an agreement to avoid any disruption to them, classes and campus life.”
Fact-Checking the Provost

URFA’s response:

• Tuition at the University of Regina has been rising every year for the past 10 years by a total of 36% regardless of changes to compensation for Academic Staff Members.

• Academic staffing is only weakly linked to enrollment. Since 2009, the number of students at the U of R has increased by roughly 33%, while the number of faculty has increased by just 4.4%

• During the same time, out-of-scope employees increased by 14.7%
Fact-Checking the Provost

According to the data available, there is a higher correlation between out-of-scope salary increases and tuition increases than exists between academic staff salary increases and tuition increases.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic year</th>
<th>Tuition increases</th>
<th>Increases in average Academic Staff salaries</th>
<th>Increases in average Out-of-Scope salaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018-19</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>Proposed 0%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-18</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>Proposed 0%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-17</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Job Action

• The URFA job action committee is responsible for determining what type of job actions are taken.
• Job Action does not mean picketing.
• There are other job actions that we can take to put pressure on the university administration while minimizing the impact on students (Rotating walkouts, information pickets, withholding of final grades, etc.)
• The committee is looking at options and developing a plan going forward.
Questions
Article 5 – Academic Planning

A Faculty to Student Ratio

URFA’s proposal is designed to protect the research portion of the academic mission while ensuring students receive the best possible teaching support.

- Maintains a complement of research faculty to student enrollment
- Allows instructor hiring where needed
- Zero cost
- Allows for short-term enrollment fluctuations
Instructor Ratio

• The University Admin’s proposal:
  • Removes Nursing from ratio calculation
  • Identical to proposal made and rejected in 2013
  • Does not protect the research mission of the institution
  • Rewards past violation
  • Doesn’t address the underlying challenge.
Article 10 - Information

This will be resolved with the conclusion of Article 5. URFA is asking for a reporting process on the Faculty/Student Ratio.
Article 23 – Benefit Provisions

23.5.2 – Records of Employment for Sessional Members
23.5.9.2 – Pensions
23.7.1 – Liability Insurance
23.5.2 – Records of Employment for Sessional Members
23.5.9.2 – Pensions
Pension

URFA’s position is that adequate pensions are essential to ensure work-life balance – inadequate pensions delay retirement and reduce quality of life.

- Pensions parity with out-of-scope
- Key to faculty renewal
Pension

The University Admin’s position:

• “Our research shows we are already competitive with our existing employer contribution rate of 7.5%. Further, the University’s pension is just one element of employees’ retirement income”
23.7.1 - Liability Insurance

URFA’s position is that members need liability insurance coverage to ensure academic freedom:
  • The University already carries insurance that covers the institution, not our members.
Liability Insurance

The University Admin’s proposal:
- Only the institution needs to be covered
- Coverage in support of academic freedom is too broad
No changes have been made past this point

Appendix A
Compensation
The proportion of the overall budget for academic staff is less at the University of Regina than in the average of our comparators, and the gap is increasing.
The U of R pays notably less at the Full and Associate ranks.
Sample Out-of-Scope Salaries

The U of R has chosen to pay some out-of-scope administrators competitively, while faculty salaries remain below comparators’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>University of Regina: $</th>
<th>University of Toronto: $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dean of Nursing</td>
<td>$242,341.00</td>
<td>$231,465.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>$365,998.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Simon Fraser: $409,501.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>University of Victoria: $362,355.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>University of Waterloo: $399,999.96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provost</td>
<td>$316,053.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Simon Fraser: $196,306.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>University of Victoria: $284,084.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>University of Waterloo: $292,500.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pension

URFA’s position is that the transition from DB to DC has reduced and will continue to reduce the value of benefits.

- The DC plan is underfunded
- This has been recognized for out-of-scope employees
- Why are academic staff less valued?
Pension

The University Admin’s proposal:
• No
Inflation

URFA’s position is that wages must at least keep pace with inflation

- Year 1: 3%
- Year 2: 2%
- Year 3: 2%
- Year 4: 2%
Inflation

The University Admin’s proposal:

- Year 1: 0%
- Year 2: 0%
- Year 3: 1%
- Year 4: 1%
- A real wage cut of up to 10.5%
Equal Pay for Equal Teaching

URFA’s position is that comparable teaching should be compensated at the same rate.

• Sessional lecturers are paid $780 - $3300 less per course than instructors with the same qualifications
• This recognizes service and research are not part of sessional duties
Equal Pay for Equal Teaching

• = $9,116

• Current Sessional III per course = $7,916
Equal Pay for Equal Teaching

• Removes the incentives to replace permanent positions with sessionals
• Removes the incentives to rely on sessionals to teach an expanding student body
Provost Web Update

• This update ignores that these gains were originally proposed by URFA and only agreed to after the membership presented a strike mandate
• Sessional benefits agreed thus far (dental and extended health coverage) were already mandated by law (Saskatchewan Employment Act 2-39; Regulations Section 35, subsection 4B)
• “Double” equals what full time employees already get
• Financial constraints do not excuse their choices
• Tuition has risen even when we get zero
Equal Pay for Equal Teaching

The University Admin’s proposal:
  • No
What I can I do?

Tell Senior Administration how you feel:
Tom Chase email: provost@uregina.ca;
BoG Chair: Cathy Warne
Vianne Timmons email: the.president@uregina.ca;
Questions?

- Fun graphic
The Path Towards a Collective Agreement

Members can vote for a strike mandate at any time during the bargaining process. A vote on a strike mandate does not necessarily lead to job action, but is a significant source of bargaining power that can be used to resolve priority issues.

A strike does not necessarily mean picket lines. A strike can include everything from wearing buttons, displaying posters, up to work disruption, rotating pickets, and full work stoppage.