

Negotiations Bulletin

DFA's 2017

Bargaining Team

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Since our most recent *Negotiations Bulletin* on September 3, the bargaining teams for the DFA and the Board of Governors have had five meetings (September 21, October 5, October 11, October 12 and October 18). Below are some highlights of our discussion, along with detailed information showing why the DFA team is extremely concerned about academic staffing.

Pension

The DFA team is troubled by the Board's proposed amendments to the pension plan, which would substantially erode the discretionary indexing for retirees. This proposal remains on the table. They have coupled this proposal with their offer to "explore opportunities to invest associated savings in ways that support the recruitment and retention of academic staff at Dalhousie." (For more details on our pension, read the July 2017 [President's Bulletin: Your Pension & You](#))

Workload and Timetable

The DFA Members have told us that workload and timetabling issues are important to them and the DFA proposals seek to address these issues. In our proposals, the DFA has taken a comprehensive approach to workload and timetabling issues, attempting to bring considerations of fairness to the teaching workload of Members. **The Board team has expressed no interest in addressing issues of workload or timetabling.**

Academic Staffing

Academic staffing was one of the main concerns expressed by our Members in the DFA survey, and many of the DFA's proposals seek to address these concerns.

The Board has proposed to alter the 90/10 rule regarding part-time staff under Clause 14.18. The current clause states that no less than 90% of the academic work can be done by DFA Members. **The Board's proposal would have the effect of increasing its ability to hire more part-time staff.**

The DFA has made a suite of proposals that would require the replacement of retiring faculty with tenure-stream appointments, and a corresponding decrease in limited-term appointments. On October 18, the DFA's Chief Negotiator Ray Larkin made a substantial presentation regarding Member concerns about academic staffing.

The data shows that there is a serious problem of faculty renewal that must be resolved in this round of bargaining. Dalhousie's hiring trends show a decrease in tenure-stream faculty and an increase in hiring faculty on limited-term contracts.



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This trend, coupled with the age demographics of faculty members, means that the University will face a serious crisis in its ability to maintain or enhance its stature as a research-intensive university.

The Faculty of Agriculture joined Dalhousie in 2012 and many of its members were subsequently added to the DFA Bargaining Unit. In order to accurately compare information on complement before and after that period, Agriculture is excluded from some of the data we present here. Including Agriculture would mask real declines in the other Dalhousie Faculties.

We share with you the documents that were provided to the Board's negotiating committee so you can assess the significance of the trends of faculty renewal over the past decade. (You can link to each of the documents by clicking on the DOCUMENT # below. They are housed on the DFA website.)

[DOCUMENT 1](#) reflects the answers to three questions in our Membership survey. ***More than any other issue, DFA Members have expressed concern about the Administration's failure to replace tenured professors who leave by tenure-stream appointments.***

[DOCUMENT 2](#) is a report prepared for administration of the "Letter of Understanding on Academic Staffing" (see page 219 of the Collective Agreement). It shows the number of Members in each appointment category from November 2002 to November 2016 (excluding Members in the Faculty of Agriculture for whom no data is available prior to November 2015). The data shows that ***over the past decade there has been a significant decline in the number of tenure-stream appointments and a corresponding increase in limited-term appointments.***

In November 2007, there were 179 probationary tenure-track and tenure-track Members; by November 2016, that number dropped to 82. During the same decade, there was a significant increase in the number of Members with limited-term appointments. ***In 2007, the total number of limited-term Members was 138*** (81 Members under Clause 14.16a + 57 Members under Clause 14.16b); ***by 2016, that number increased to 179*** (148 Members under Clause 14.16a + 31 Members under Clause 14.16b).

[DOCUMENT 3](#) shows a breakdown of these numbers by Faculty in 2007, 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016. In 2016, Members with limited-term appointments accounted for 19.25% of the bargaining unit, but there were considerable differences by Faculty. For example, limited-term appointments were 20.14% in Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences; 37.59% in Health Professions; and 14.93% in Science.

[DOCUMENT 4](#) looks at the most recent changes in the proportion of the limited-term Members to the bargaining unit as a whole. As of January 2017, 20.57% of the bargaining unit were Members with limited terms and only 12.30% of the bargaining unit were in career-stream appointments. This disparity is most significant among instructors, where 53.60% of instructors held limited-term appointments. In the professoriate, the percentage of tenure-stream appointments was 11.71%, while limited-term appointments were 14.95% of the professoriate. ***The longer-term trend of decline in tenure-stream appointments and increase in limited-term appointments is continuing.***



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[DOCUMENT 5](#) sets out the number of Members in five different age groups, *excluding* Faculty of Agriculture, limited-term, librarians and counsellors. Among professors, 259 Members were aged 53 or older; 215 Members were age 43-52; and 119 Members were age 33-42.

If the decline in tenure-stream appointments continues, in 10 years' time there will be a significantly lower number of faculty aged 53 and over than today and ***the pool from which exceptional scholars, successful researchers and great teachers is drawn will significantly decline.***

The DFA negotiators argue that ***this data demonstrates a substantial failure of faculty renewal, which is very worrisome for the future and which can only be corrected by making the appointment of tenure-stream faculty a priority.***

Feedback

If you have any questions, comments or feedback, please pass them along to the DFA office (see contact information to the left).

The Negotiations Bulletin will be issued throughout collective bargaining. Future issues will be posted to the Members Only area of our website.