

For Immediate Release
October 20, 2022

Acadia Faculty Receive Contract After 15 Months of Uncertainty

Wolfville—The 16th Collective Agreement between the Acadia University Faculty Association (AUFA) and Acadia’s Board of Governors (BoG) was finalised and signed on October 20, 2022. This ends a prolonged period of uncertainty for AUFA members, who had been without a contract since July 2021.

The process and timeline to get to the 16th Collective Agreement were not ones AUFA sought. Despite the best efforts of AUFA, negotiations began late and were unproductive. “The BoG team didn’t respond to most of our initial proposals, instead declaring an impasse, walking away from the table, and filing for conciliation in November 2021,” recalled AUFA President Erin Crandall. These problems resulted in AUFA members giving their overwhelming support to AUFA’s negotiating Team, voting 94% in favour of authorising a strike if necessary. AUFA went on strike for 4 weeks in February 2022, ending only when it became apparent that the BoG team would rather cancel the semester than negotiate. With no other recourse and mindful of the strike’s impact on students, AUFA agreed to submit to binding third-party arbitration.

The arbitrator issued his award on July 29, 2022. Some of the gains awarded to AUFA include preserving a minimum number of full-time faculty, cluster hires of Indigenous and Black scholars, increased job security and pay for part-time employees, increased protection of academic freedom, and strengthened health benefits.

“While we’re happy that the arbitrator recognized the value of many of our arguments, arbitration is not the process we wanted,” commented Crandall. “This round of bargaining was unnecessarily extended.”

AUFA remains hopeful that future rounds will see a return to productive collective bargaining to negotiate a fair and equitable contract. This is the only way to ensure collegial governance, which is a cornerstone of faculty members’ working conditions and the life of the entire university. Faculty working conditions at Acadia are students’ learning conditions.

The Acadia University Faculty Association is the certified bargaining agent for 350 full-time and part-time professors, librarians, archivists, and instructors at Acadia University. Follow us on Twitter (@AcadiaFaculty) for further information and updates.

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