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A lot has happened since our last issue of *The Communicator*. In this issue, we provide a brief summary, as well as information about what to expect in the coming months.

In this issue of *The Communicator*, you will find news related to the negotiations of the 17<sup>th</sup> Collective Agreement, new initiatives that AUFA has implemented in the past year to help AUFA members, and other issues that are important to the membership (see Table to Contents). But first, a message from our outgoing President.

## A MESSAGE FROM AUFA'S PRESIDENT

Hello fellow members of the Acadia University Faculty Association (AUFA)! I am coming to you with what will likely be my final communication as AUFA President. Chelsea Gardner steps into the AUFA Presidency on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025.

I wanted to express a sincere thank you to all members of AUFA for your continuous support and conversation over the past year. Connecting with our members is a core tenant of AUFA and every single person I talked to this year provided me with valuable insight into things that AUFA does well and things that need improvement as we move forward into a new academic year. Thank you, as well, to the AUFA Executive over the 2025-2026 Academic year - Paul Abela, Alice Cohen, Erin Crandall, Michelle Damour, Chelsea Gardner, Joseph Hayes, Deborah Hemming, Stephen MacLean, and Christine Moreau - your efforts to support our members have been incredible and it is much appreciated.

Remember that there are many ways that members can contribute to AUFA – please consider reaching out to AUFA if you are interested in contributing, even if you don't know what that contribution would look like.

I wish everyone a happy and healthy summer!

Stephanie Jones  
AUFA President (until June 30<sup>th</sup>)

# COLLECTIVE BARGAINING UPDATE

Negotiations for the 17th Collective Agreement between AUFA and the Board of Governors officially began on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025. The two sides have now met more than 10 times and have made substantial progress.

According to our Negotiating Team, every non-financial proposal put forward by both sides has now been discussed in detail. Plus, they have signed 5 Articles and 2 MOA's and are nearly ready to sign-off on 8 more Articles. More than twenty additional Articles are still being discussed, and according to our team, significant progress has been made on many of them. Anthony Pash (Chief Negotiator) stated that "if all continues to go well, we should be having substantive negotiations on major financial proposals sometime in July."

For context, negotiations for the 16<sup>th</sup> Collective Agreement began on July 5<sup>th</sup>, and by August 19<sup>th</sup>, they had met a total of 9 times. At that time, they had made some progress on 3 Articles, but the Board had not yet responded to most of AUFA's proposals. The two sides are scheduled to meet an additional 9 times between now and the end of July.

## The Negotiating Teams

AUFA's Negotiating Team		The Board's Negotiating Team
Anthony Pash (Chief)	Burc Kayahan	Erin Beaudin (Chief)
Paul Abela	Stephanie Jones	Ashlee Cunsolo
Mariah Cooper	Jeffrey Sachs	Jeff Hooper
Eva Curry		

Thus far, negotiations for the 17<sup>th</sup> Collective Agreement have gone relatively smoothly. Assuming things continue on this track, we may have a new collective agreement by the time classes begin in the Fall (a first in recent memory).

While things appear to be going well so far, it is always possible for negotiations to break down. We faced a similar situation when negotiating for the 15<sup>th</sup> Collective Agreement, where processes were running smoothly until financial matters entered the discussion. Given the current environment around fiscal restraint stemming from Bill 12, this could happen again. We nevertheless remain optimistic.

### Roadmap to a Collective Agreement

In the event that negotiations *do* break down, here is what you can expect in terms of the process.

The first step is for one side to declare an impasse. This can lead either side to file for conciliation—a process whereby a neutral third-party attempts to get the two sides to regain meaningful progress toward an agreement. The Conciliator’s goal would be to put pressure on both sides to make meaningful concessions so that a deal becomes possible. If AUFA can show that they have strong support from the membership, the Conciliator can use this to exert pressure on the Board. As such, we would likely hold a strike vote prior to entering conciliation.

A strike vote does not immediately trigger strike action, but rather authorizes the AUFA Executive to call a strike if necessary. This action is not undertaken lightly, however, so it tends to be used only as a last resort when meaningful negotiations appear impossible. Such was the case during negotiations for the 16<sup>th</sup> Collective Agreement. Heading into conciliation with a strong strike vote would maximize the pressure on the Board of Governors to make concessions.

If the conciliation process does not lead to an agreement, a mandatory 14-day “cooling off” period is triggered before either side can initiate job action (i.e., a strike or a lock-out). Other processes, including third-party mediation or arbitration, are also possible means of resolving deadlocks in negotiations. In fact, the 16<sup>th</sup> Collective Agreement was only achieved through arbitration after a month-long strike.

For now, AUFA remains cautiously optimistic that the 17<sup>th</sup> Collective Agreement can be achieved through negotiations. If a tentative agreement is reached, the membership will be notified, and a meeting will be held to vote on ratification. If the membership approves of the tentative agreement and votes in favour of adopting it, then it becomes our new collective agreement.

## Congratulations to Recent Retirees!

AUFA would like to extend heartfelt congratulations to all recently retired members.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Department/Unit</u>	<u>Retirement Date</u>
Anna Migliarisi	English & Theatre	Jul 1, 2024
Danny Silver	Computer Science	Sep 1, 2024
Stephen Maitzen	Philosophy	Sep 1, 2024
Brenda Trofanenko	Education	Sep 1, 2024
Claire Mallin	Music	Sep 1, 2024
Robert Seale	English & Theatre	Dec 16, 2024
Robert Proulx	Languages and Literatures	Jan 1, 2025
Lisa Price	Psychology	Jan 1, 2025

## BILL 12

One of the most significant developments of the Winter 2025 term was the introduction and subsequent passing of Bill 12 (an Act Respecting Advanced Education and Research). This new legislation has significant implications for universities across the province. Schedule H processes require a review of all academic programs, along with plans for modernizing, revitalizing, or rationalizing them.

AUFA remains committed to protecting the Collective Agreement in the face of this government overreach. We struck an AUFA working group to push back against Bill 12, engaging in discussions and action against Bill 12. Significantly, our members launched a letter writing and call campaign, with the support of the Association of Nova Scotia University Teachers (ANSUT) and their “Stop Bill 12” website. Thank you to Christine Moreau, Jesse Carlson, and Stephanie Jones for their efforts! If you are interested in getting involved in AUFA’s Bill 12 working group, please reach out to Christine Moreau.

AUFA also nationally challenged Bill 12 by seconding the below motion put forward to the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) council:

“CAUT condemns the Province of Nova Scotia's omnibus Bill 12, An Act Respecting Advanced Education and Research. This Bill represents unprecedented political interference in the operational affairs and autonomy of Nova Scotian Universities. University funding should never be required to be tied to nor aligned with political priorities as this Bill will require. Political interference, as enacted by Bill 12, will limit Nova Scotian institutions of Higher Educations to the detriment of society.” (passed May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025).

As Bill 12 passed, representatives from AUFA have now joined with other faculty associations, the ANSUT and CAUT to speak out against Bill 12 (and other legislation that, collectively, represent an attack on democracy in our province - Bills 1, 6, 11, 12, 21, 36 and 68). We are currently fighting to get faculty voices/representation involved in the development of regulations pertaining to Bill 12.

### CAUT Equity Award Winner!

Please join us in congratulating Dr. Juan Carlos Lopez for receiving the Canadian Association for University Teachers (CAUT) Equity Award. This award recognizes Juan Carlos’ tireless efforts to promote equity at Acadia, including his ongoing work with the Employment Equity Committee (EEC).



# CAUT ORGANIZING SCHOOL

In January 2025, AUFA members were invited to collectively register for CAUT “Organizing School 101”. Organizing School is a virtual training course that helps faculty associations strategize ways to better organize and strengthen their memberships, increase engagement, and advocate for various causes.

Over the course of four sessions, five AUFA participants (Rachel Brickner, Chelsea Gardner, Stephanie Jones, Christine Moreau, and Natalie Swain) gathered together to learn tools and strategies to strengthen the power of our association. Many wonderful conversations and initiatives arose from this foundational course, and AUFA was the only organization to have multiple members attending together!

This course is open to all members, so if you are interested in participating in an Organizing School in the future, please see the description and [fill in the form on CAUT’s website](#) or email Chelsea Gardner to be included in further communication.

## NEW POLICIES

**Emergency Support Fund Policy:** AUFA’s Emergency Support Fund Policy was adopted in October 2024. This policy provides support to members facing extraordinary financial crises. [Check out the policy on the AUFA’s website.](#)

**Travel Fund Assistance Policy:** AUFA’s Travel Fund Assistance Policy was recently adopted at the March Membership meeting (2025)! The policy was updated to consider the current costs of travel and recognize that both continuing and limited-term faculty may seek travel fund assistance for union-related professional development. [Check out the updated policy on AUFA’s website.](#)

**AUFA Workplace Violence Prevention Policy:** For the past year, the AUFA Executive Committee has been working toward developing a workplace violence prevention policy. The purpose of this policy is to protect anyone employed by AUFA against harassment or other forms of workplace violence.

While AUFA currently only has one employee (Jane Longley), this policy would apply to any new or additional employees that AUFA may hire, including anyone who works for us on a contractual basis. The AUFA Executive will be seeking to formally adopt this policy during the next membership meeting in the Fall. If you have questions about this policy, please contact Stephanie Jones.

## Hybrid or Hyflex?

Did you know that Acadia University has recently changed the language used to describe online course offerings? This change comes following the release of new terminology by the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC) that aims to standardize the definitions for different modes of online course delivery to facilitate common understanding.

The MPHEC definitions can be found [here](#), but the main differentiation comes with the addition of a new term “hyflex” which refers to instruction that is available online and in-person, and students can move between online and in-person. This means that what many of us understood as hybrid teaching during the pandemic years (where students could attend in person, or via Teams) is now referred to as a hyflex mode of delivery. The term “hybrid” learning is now reserved to describe a blend of online and in-person instruction, where online instruction can be synchronous or asynchronous.

Acadia University has already posted job ads using the new language. We figure this information is pertinent to anyone thinking of applying for such postings, whether on teaching overload or as a per course instructor.

## MONEY MATTERS

**Biweekly Pay Cycle:** As of September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, AUFA members will be paid on a biweekly basis. Recall that this change was initiated as part of the Acadia’s switch from Colleague to Dayforce for processes related to payroll, benefits, and pension. Given that Dayforce cannot accommodate the multiple pay cycles occurring at Acadia, all employees have been asked to switch to a biweekly cycle.

An initial MOA related to this matter was sent out in April, and a special meeting was held on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, to discuss the pros and cons of the switch. Ultimately, a [revised MOA](#) was distributed on June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, and is now in effect.

Members are advised to plan accordingly, as this change could lead to end-of-the-month shortfalls relative to the current monthly pay cycle. As part of the MOA, however, Acadia has assured our members that they will not experience financial disadvantages resulting from the change, and that the University will take the necessary actions needed to remedy the situation if any member does. To be cautious, we recommend that you pay closer attention to your paycheck when the change is initiated.

**Pay discrepancies:** You may have noticed that your gross pay changed between February and March. The change represents a difference of between 7 and 25 cents per pay period, depending on job category, rank, and step.

This change was required to correct an error made when salaries were updated following the conclusion of the salary reopener, which you will recall provided for a 3.75% salary increase. In implementing this increase, the administration failed to apply the Grid Principles for the salary reopener correctly. This was corrected in March.

**AUFA *Per Diem* Rate Change:** The amount that AUFA members can claim for meals as part of job-related travel is going up! The AUFA rates are tied to the CAUT rates, which are now \$24.90 for breakfast, \$25.20 for lunch, \$61.85 for dinner, and \$17.30 for incidentals (total = \$129.25 per diem). The kilometric rate for the use of your own vehicle is now \$0.59/km. If you have any questions about the *per diem*, please contact Jane Longley.

## WELCOME TO THE INCOMING EXECUTIVE!

**President** – Chelsea Gardner (History and Classics)

**President Elect (*Pro Tem*)** – Geoffrey Whitehall (Politics)

**Past President** – Stephanie Jones (Psychology)

**Secretary** – Ryan Stack (Business)

**Treasurer** – Stephen MacLean (Business)

**Member-at-Large** – Michelle Damour (English)

**Member-at-Large** – Ciaran Purdome (Library and Archives)

**Member-at-Large** – Sazia Mahfuz (Computer Science)

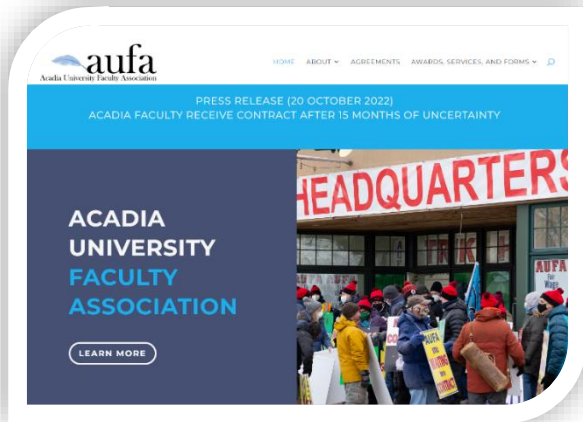
**Member-at-Large (part time)** – *TBD*

### Limited-Term Outreach Coordinator

A call for applications for the Limited-Term Outreach Coordinator position (formerly named: Part-Timme Outreach Coordinator) will be coming to your inbox in July.

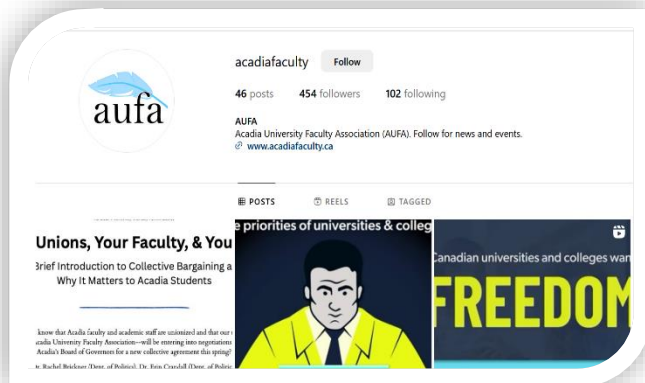


## FOR MORE INFORMATION:



Check out the AUFA website!

Visit our X-Twitter account!



Follow our Instagram page!

**\*New\***

We are now also on Bluesky!





## CONTACT US:

Do you have questions for the association? Don't hesitate to reach out!

- [Stephanie Jones](#) (Outgoing President) or [Chelsea Gardner](#) (Incoming President, as of July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025) can answer general questions or concerns,
- [Joe Hayes](#) (Chair of the Communications Committee) can answer questions about the contents of this newsletter.

## IN SOLIDARITY,

### The Communications Committee

Joe Hayes (Chair), Nicoletta Faraone, Christine Moreau, Jon Saklofske, Mo Snyder



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