

Stephen Ahern has a very long and impressive record of service to AUFA. It is so extensive that this list is surely missing some of his many roles and contributions!

Stephen was the Chief Negotiator for the 1<sup>st</sup> Collective Agreement for the part-timers, back when part-time faculty were in a separate bargaining unit. Being Chief Negotiator for *any* Collective Agreement is a crushing amount of work, but to do it for a first agreement, starting entirely from scratch, must have been staggering. More recently, Stephen was Vice-President during the lead-up to negotiations for the 15<sup>th</sup> Collective Agreement, and thus Chair of the Proposals Committee, which is a significant undertaking. He was President during the bargaining year for the 15<sup>th</sup> Collective Agreement, and a President in a bargaining year always has to prepare for the possibility of a lockout or strike, and that year we came within two hours of hitting the pavement! No doubt our strike preparedness under Stephen's watch helped us secure a deal and avert that strike. Midway through negotiations for the 16<sup>th</sup> Collective Agreement, Stephen stepped in with zero notice to replace the Records Officer who had to take an unexpected leave. He also served on the negotiating team for the salary re-opener for the 16<sup>th</sup> CA, and took on the role of Senior Grievance Officer for a period when we desperately needed him.

In addition to these more high-profile contributions, Stephen has also worked less visibly behind the scenes in many ways, such as taking the lead on important revisions to the AUFA constitution, particularly improving the structure and procedures of the Grievance Appeals Committee. He recently led the work on cleaning up the Collective Agreement: identifying and fixing all those little typographical errors, inconsistencies in terminology, missing or incorrect cross-references, missing or misplaced punctuation marks, all the messes that get made in the cut-and-thrust of end-stage negotiations. This is fairly unglamorous work, but useful and important; if anyone doubts the value of proper punctuation, look up the “Aliant comma”.

Even when taking on the most challenging and stressful roles for AUFA, Stephen never loses his temper or takes things personally. He just calmly gets it done with a sharp eye for detail and a constant awareness of the big picture. We are all better off because of Stephen's contributions to AUFA.