



University of Victoria
Faculty Association

F.A. Relay

Fall 2021
Bargaining Kick-Off

Message from F.A. President Lynne Marks



I'm pleased to start this issue of the Relay with some good news, which has been in rather short supply over the last 18 months. Overall, it seems that UVic's vaccination declaration system (with audits) and rapid testing are working reasonably well to protect the members of our community. A recent article in the Globe and Mail about BC post-secondary vaccination declaration/rapid testing systems (October 25, 2021), suggests that UVic is facing fewer issues than our sister research universities in Vancouver. UVic could of course always do better, but it is good that we do not seem to be facing all of the same challenges as our colleagues at UBC or SFU.

This issue of the Relay focuses on the Association's preparations for our next round of collective bargaining. On that theme, I'm pleased to begin with positive news from our last round of bargaining. The FA's former President and Chief Negotiator, Helga Hallgrímsdóttir, has been awarded the Canadian University Teachers Association (CAUT) Donald C. Savage Award. This prestigious award honours and recognizes "outstanding achievements in the promotion of collective bargaining in Canadian universities and colleges." Helga was

nominated by the UVic FA, with many enthusiastic letters of endorsement from FA members, for her hard and skillful work both in the last round of bargaining and her earlier efforts both in negotiations and in bringing the membership together following certification.

It is personally sobering to follow this positive and exciting news by speaking about our upcoming bargaining round, set to begin in February of 2022. Since Helga is no longer available to be our Chief Negotiator ☺, I have taken on this role. The reality of the pandemic has given me experience in how to engage in ongoing bargaining with the administration, as the Association has tried to address the range of our members' concerns created by the pandemic, and I will be able to draw on this experience as a negotiator. I am pleased that in bargaining I will be working with the very impressive members of the Negotiating Team, who are also introduced in these pages.

As most of you are aware, we have begun our pre-bargaining preparations. I very much enjoyed the opportunity to (virtually) visit your departments across campus last spring, and hear about

your concerns, and your priorities for bargaining. Your comments will very much inform the bargaining surveys we have started to send out. Our staff and Collective Agreement Committee members have been working hard on the surveys, which have already been sent out to librarians, Chairs/Directors, and teaching stream members. Over the next six weeks all members will receive surveys on issues of general concern, including salary, benefits, teaching, research and service workload and RPT evaluation processes. We will also be sending a separate survey to our Indigenous members to determine their concerns.

I thank those of you who last year completed a number of FA surveys related to COVID. It very much helped us to advocate on your behalf with the administration for various COVID supports. Moving forward, robust responses to Association bargaining surveys will strengthen our position with the administration as we enter bargaining, and help us to determine your highest priorities.

COVID changed much in our workplaces, and may also impact what we can achieve in bargaining. The provincial government's deficit spending to support those most negatively impacted by COVID means that the government's mandate regarding wage increases for the broader public sector, including universities, will likely be significantly less than the 2%/2%/2% increases of the last round. We have heard rumours that it may be 0-0-2, but we hope not, and through our joint postsecondary organizations plan to lobby strongly for a more reasonable mandate. While COVID-related spending may be used by the BC government to justify reduced spending on postsecondary wage mandates, at the same time, COVID has shown us the need for stronger collective agreements. Most obviously, UVic faculty members and librarians need stronger language around workload, given our limited power when COVID conditions increased our workloads dramatically over the past year. We also need to bargain for support to help rebuild research careers, and to continue to take COVID impacts into consideration in RPT and salary evaluation. We

Upcoming Events

Collective Bargaining Drop-in Sessions
NOVEMBER 8TH
1-2:30PM
NOVEMBER 15TH
1-2:30PM

Chairs and Directors Forums
NOVEMBER 8TH
2-4PM
NOVEMBER 10TH
1:30-3:30PM

Faculty Feedback Cafes
NOVEMBER 19TH
11AM-12:30PM
NOVEMBER 26TH
1-2:30PM
DECEMBER 8TH
11AM-12:30PM

Faculty Mentor Workshop
NOVEMBER 19TH
12-2PM
[Click Here to Register](#)

General Membership Meeting
DECEMBER 9TH
2-4PM

For information, please visit [our events page](#) or contact us at adminfa@uvic.ca

also need to recognize the ways in which these impacts have disproportionately affected already disadvantaged groups within our membership.

We also recognize that the CPI drop-offs, which the Association agreed to in the last round of bargaining in order to dramatically improve our salary structure, need to be removed, or at least significantly extended. In the COVID context, the limit of 11 years at the associate level before losing CPI is particularly egregious, given the negative impact of COVID on research and scholarly productivity. And we hope that the administration is starting to recognize, as I was told in many department visits, that a lifetime cap of 28 years for CPI means that many productive scholars in their mid to late 50s may be looking elsewhere for more lucrative positions, or may remain at UVic with no incentive to engage in department or university service.

In addition to the surveys we will be sending out in the next few weeks, we will also be holding drop ins and Faculty Feedback Cafes. At the Cafes, we will report on the results of surveys that you have completed, and seek further input from you regarding your priorities on various topics related to bargaining.

After we have received all of your feedback, through department visits, surveys, drop-ins and Cafes, we will work to craft a bargaining mandate that reflects your concerns, and we will bring this mandate to a vote at Council and General Membership meetings in January. I cannot stress too strongly that the more of you who participate in the surveys and the meetings, the stronger our position will be at the bargaining table. If the administration knows that the membership has been actively involved in providing the feedback necessary to develop a robust bargaining mandate, this gives us more leverage in working to achieve improvements for you.

I'd like to end with a reminder about the importance of your participation in the Vice President Academic and Provost search process currently

underway. Thanks to all of those who have attended the candidate presentations, or listened to the recordings if you were not able to attend the presentations, and looked over the CVs of the candidates.

I very much encourage you to submit your feedback on the three candidates, focusing in particular on how well they may fit with the criteria for the position. This feedback provides crucial information as the committee decides which candidate to put forward for ratification by UVic's faculty members.

Information about the appointment process and how to provide feedback is available here:

<https://www.uvic.ca/universitysecretary/home/vpac-search/candidate-information/index.php>

[The Petch Procedures](#) (or, the ratification of senior academic leaders) provide UVic faculty members with a unique democratic right to play a major role in the selection of our leaders. I know that everyone is busy, but I very much hope that you can take the time to consider each candidate carefully, provide feedback to the committee and participate thoughtfully in the ratification process.

I look forward to seeing you and hearing from you at the drop-ins and Faculty Feedback Cafes, and wish you well as we get closer to the reprieve of Reading Break.

All the very best,



Bargaining - The Basics

Collective Bargaining can be a complex and intimidating process - especially if you aren't familiar with it! We've tried to answer some of the most common questions about it here, but you can always reach out if there is something we've missed.

What is Collective Bargaining?

In a unionized environment such as ours, negotiating teams representing the union and the employer get together at scheduled times (usually every 3 to 5 years as specified in the current collective agreement) to negotiate a collective agreement. The negotiating team representing the union is made up of members of the union and the negotiating team representing the employer is made up of management representatives and faculty relations staff.

In British Columbia, the Public Sector Employer's Council (PSEC) establishes bargaining mandates which determine limits on important bargaining issues such as compensation packages (including wages & benefits) and contract terms. Unions like UVicFA who represent employees within the public sector must contend with these restrictions in their attempt to negotiate fair and beneficial contracts.

What is a Collective Agreement?

A collective agreement is a written contract between the union and the employer that sets out the terms of employment for members of a bargaining unit. It determines the benefits and salary structure, the duties and responsibilities of our job and the obligations the university has to us. It also identifies the processes of appointment, reappointment, tenure, and promotion and includes articles of financial exigency and sets out the process for disciplinary action, among other important items.

Who determines what the FA's position will be in bargaining?

The FA is a member driven organization and the negotiation team builds its bargaining mandate based on a broad consensus of the membership. Members, along with the Board of Governors on the University's side, hold the final deciding vote on whether a Collective Agreement is ratified. This is one reason why the FA conducts such rigorous consultation (department visits, surveys, meetings, etc.) ahead of bargaining, and why it is so important for members to stay engaged. Such rigorous consultation also ensures that we speak for our members at the bargaining table. When the administration knows that our demands very much reflect the demands of our members, we have much stronger leverage at the table.

In January, following the completion and analysis of all of our bargaining surveys, we will develop a bargaining mandate that reflects the priority concerns of our members. This bargaining mandate will be presented to a Council Meeting and General Meeting in January, where it will be discussed, amended if necessary and passed by the members. The terms of the mandate will guide the writing of more specific proposals, which will be presented to the administration at the bargaining table. The negotiating team is responsible for making decisions at the table and for securing the strongest possible collective agreement to then present to the general membership.

What Happens at the Bargaining Table?

Bargaining is a pretty formal process. Each side will go through the current collective agreement ahead of time and come up with proposals for modification or even radical changes. These proposals are presented at the bargaining table. After the presentation of a proposal, the other side has the opportunity to ask for more information about the proposal and then can go into recess to consult among its members. Each proposal is eventually met with a counter proposal or acceptance from the other side.

How long does it take?

That varies. While the frequency of meetings during the bargaining period varies, it's not uncommon to negotiate past the expiration of the current agreement and it has happened at UVic before,

although in the last round of bargaining a tentative agreement was reached on the last day before the agreement expired. For collective agreements representing as many members as ours, collective bargaining will likely take several months.

What is my role as a member of the Association?

The value of collective bargaining comes from the ability of employees to work and act together towards the establishment of a stronger, fairer, and more beneficial collective agreement. As such, it's important for members to stay engaged throughout the process. The Faculty Association will be reaching out to provide information and seek your opinions and your support ahead of and during bargaining. Please complete any applicable surveys, send us emails if you have any questions or comments, and attend bargaining updates if you can to make your views on the collective agreement heard.

The more the administration knows that our demands at the table have the support of our membership, the stronger our bargaining position will be in negotiating the best possible agreement for us all.

Upcoming Faculty-Wide Bargaining Surveys

- Compensation (Salary, Benefits, Salary Evaluation, Retirement)
- Workload and Accommodation
- RPT and Evaluation
- Bargaining Priority Rankings

Meet your Negotiating Team



Lynne Marks

Chief Negotiator

I'm a professor in the History Department. I first served on the FA's Executive Committee from 1995-1997, as a very junior faculty member. I served on the FA's Equity Committee in the early 2000s, before going off to be Chair of the Academic Women's Caucus and then Chair of History. I re-joined the FA Executive Committee in 2015, shortly after certification. I was acting Vice President in the fall of 2018, and Chair of the Collective Agreement Committee in 2018-19, and have been FA President since July 2019. In this role I have negotiated numerous COVID-related agreements with the Administration. I look forward to working as Chief Negotiator with all of the great people on the Negotiating Team as we bargain for an improved Collective Agreement for all of our members.

Caterina Valeo

Negotiating Team Co-Chair

I have been at UVic for 10 years in the department of Mechanical Engineering. I started actively working in the FA in 2016 as a member of the Arbitration and Dispute Resolution Committee and later joined the 2019 Negotiating Team to help negotiate the new Collective Agreement. Given what I have experienced and my desire to help resolve issues that arose from the new CA, I am now Co-Chair of the 2022 Negotiating Team, the Chair of the Collective Agreement Committee, and I serve on the Joint Committee for the Administration of the Agreement.



Elisabeth Gugl

Negotiating Team Co-Chair

I'm the Associate Chair and an Associate Professor in the Economics Department. I joined UVic in 2003. I was on the negotiation team for the 2019 collective agreement and have been the FA treasurer for almost two years. I'm looking forward to working with Caterina Valero for a second time in bargaining and with all the new people on the team. After the 2019 agreement took effect I have chaired the tuition benefit committee and administered the FA tuition benefit awards together with FA staff.

Christine O'Bonsawin

Negotiating Team Member

Kwaï/Greetings. I am a member of the Abenaki Nation, and I have been a visitor to Ləkʷəŋən and WSÁNEĆ territories for 14 years. I joined the University of Victoria in 2007 as the director of Indigenous Studies and a faculty member in the Department of History. I am currently an associate professor and teach in History and Indigenous Studies. I have served on the FA Equity Committee since 2019 and as the co-chair of the Indigenous Faculty Ad Hoc Committee since 2020. In this next round of bargaining, I am excited to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion and, therefore, support all UVic faculty's future success.



Christopher Eagle

Negotiating Team Member (Teaching Faculty)

I have been an Assistant Teaching Professor in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics since 2016. I am currently a member of the Faculty Association Executive and Advising and Dispute Resolution Committees, formerly chair of the Teaching Stream committee, and I was chair of the committee that produced the Mathematics and Statistics unit standards. This is my first time serving on the negotiating team.

Justin Harrison

Negotiating Team Member (Librarian)

I have been a Librarian for seventeen years, and at UVic for fourteen years. I served as chair of the FA's Librarian Committee, and have held a number of positions in the Libraries, including Learning Commons Librarian, Coordinator of Learning & Research, and the subject librarian for several disciplines in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Under the Libraries' new structure I am excited to be a member of its new Reconciliation initiative.



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