

From: [FAFA](#) on behalf of [FA President](#)
To: [Faculty Association](#)
Subject: [Fafa] A Small Victory and a Bargaining Update
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A Small Victory and a Bargaining Update

Dear Members,

More re Mask Mandates

I am pleased to let you know that there has been a small victory in regard to mask mandates. As you may be aware, since the University dropped the mask mandate, faculty have not been able to require masks in their own individual offices. However, thanks to the tireless advocacy of Dr. Terri Lacourse, FA rep and co-chair of the University Safety Committee, the University has agreed that faculty and staff can now require that visitors to their individual offices wear masks, as long as the office user provides an alternative way of meeting for those who do not wish to or cannot wear masks. This may include offering office hours virtually or moving the meeting to a larger room, if available.

The UVic COVID website has been updated to reflect this change in policy:

The office user can ask someone to wear a mask in their individual office. However, if the visitor to the space is unable or unwilling to wear a mask, and the office user chooses not to hold the meeting in the office space, the office user must provide alternate methods of meeting.

<https://www.uvic.ca/vpacademic/news/current/masks-spring-term-2022.php>.

Thank you, Terri!

Collective Bargaining Update

The Association commenced collective bargaining with the University on Thursday March 3. As I noted earlier, Elder Skip Dick and Dr. Sarah Hunt provided wise and meaningful opening words when we began. We were also honoured to have two Indigenous Witnesses present to witness the opening of bargaining – Dr. Lisa Kahaleole Hall, Indigenous Studies and Dr. Jenny Morgan, Social Work. The Witnesses will return to witness the closing of bargaining.

Both parties agreed to begin bargaining in a more collaborative way and we spent the first few weeks engaged in higher level discussion around issues to determine where we have areas of mutual interest. Discussion topics included issues such as benefits, RPT language for Teaching Stream faculty, Indigenous faculty issues and topics related to retirement. While these general discussions have been productive for the most part, we are looking forward to trading actual proposals with the University. We plan to begin doing this at the end of April. This has been delayed because the [PSEC \(Public Sector Employers' Council\)](#) mandate is not yet finalized.

Established in 1993 by NDP Premier Mike Harcourt, PSEC controls union and non-union compensation across the public sector. The 500,000 workers in the provincial public sector come

from the core public service, Crown corporations, health, community social services, K-12, and post-secondary institutions. The [PSEC mandate](#) is largely informed by the settlement that the BCGEU, which represents most of the core public sector workers, reaches with the provincial government. The BCGEU is currently facing a challenging bargaining environment, given surging inflation and does not appear close to finalizing an agreement with the government. In fact, yesterday the BCGEU declared an impasse in bargaining, which may result in a strike vote by BCGEU members. This is obviously delaying adoption of the 2022 PSEC mandate. The delay in a clear mandate from PSEC means that while we can start exchanging proposals at the end of April that do not have financial implications (such as, for example, changes to RPT language), we are currently limited in regards to monetary discussions that we can have at the bargaining table. We are hoping that this will change soon and that we can engage the University on the crucial issue of what your compensation package will look like over the next few years.

If we are not able to come to agreement with the University by the end of June when the current Collective Agreement ends, the provisions of the current Collective Agreement will remain in force until a new Agreement is ratified by FA members and the Board of Governors. Any changes/increases in compensation agreed to in the new Agreement will then be applied retroactively, back to July 1, 2022.

For more information on collective bargaining, please see our recent [newsletter introducing the bargaining process and our negotiating team](#).

Membership Services

Just a reminder that during bargaining our Vice President Monica Prendergast will be taking over a number of my regular responsibilities, including membership services. Monica can be reached at vicepresfa@uvic.ca. As always, if you have any workplace related questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to our membership services officers:

Reuben Kellen msofa@uvic.ca

Ben Johnson advisorfa@uvic.ca

Nathan Todd uvicfa@uvic.ca

On another matter, I will write you later next week about some FA concerns regarding university governance.

I hope to see many of you at our [AGM](#) next Tuesday, April 12th at 1:30, on Zoom; <https://uvic.zoom.us/j/95909795893>

Congratulations on making it to the end of term! I hope that your marking will not be too onerous, and you'll have some time to enjoy the spring weather.

All the very best,

Lynne

Lynne Marks

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University of Victoria Faculty Association
<http://www.uvicfa.ca/>

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We recognize with respect the W̱SÁNEĆ (Saanich), Wyomilth (Esquimalt), and Lkwungen (Songhees) peoples on whose territories the University of Victoria stands, and whose relationships with this land remain profound today.

We acknowledge the devastation that government-created residential schools and Indian hospitals has inflicted on the health and wellbeing of Indigenous peoples and the ongoing effects of concentric trauma that continue to this day.

