

BARGAINING BULLETIN



This edition of the *Bargaining Bulletin* is to provide the first update to members on the status of the ongoing negotiations for this round. We would also like to take the opportunity to extend a warm welcome to our new members and wish all members a successful academic year.

As most of you are aware, The *Fifth Collective Agreement* (CA) between StFXAUT and the Board of Governors of StFX expired on June 30, 2022. After a lengthy delay to permit the clarification of the University's Financial Statements, Collective Bargaining to negotiate the next collective agreement commenced on July 7th, 2023, with several sessions held during July and August. A previous [Edition](#) of the *Bargaining Bulletin* introduced our team and provided some insight into the planning process.

Initial Proposals:

On July 7th, the StFXAUT Negotiation Team, consisting of Dr. David Young, Ms. Kathleen MacKenzie, and Dr. Geniece Hallett-Tapley, presented at the table 94 suggested editorial changes to the CA, 30 of which are deemed significant changes, with the others being grammatical or other corrections. The StFX Negotiation Team, consisting of Mr. Daniel Draper, Dr. Karen Brebner, and Dr. Cathy MacDonald, presented 50 pages of articles containing their editorial suggestions, with many in common.

On July 19th, the StFXAUT Team proposed the opening of 85 articles for negotiations, and the StFX Team countered with proposals for 40 articles. On July 28th, both sides presented their initial set of financial proposals. Altogether, with editorial changes, proposals, and financial components, more than 100 articles are under discussion.

Glossary

Below are the definitions of several terms relevant to this stage of negotiations:

Good Faith Bargaining means that both parties must be sincere in their attempts to reach an agreement. This includes meeting with the other side and making every reasonable effort to conclude an agreement. The bargaining process calls for a certain amount of give and take. Failure to agree with the other side's bargaining demands does not in itself mean that a party is not bargaining in good faith. However, a deliberate strategy by either party to prevent reaching an agreement is considered bad faith bargaining.

Progress:

After a slow start, during which the teams were establishing protocols and adjusting to the overall dynamics, progress has been improving. The teams met several days in August, reaching agreement on 25 articles and coming close to completion on about 35 others. This leaves over 40 under contention, with language dealing with improvements in benefits or financial compensation yet to be negotiated.

Next Steps:

Several additional days of negotiations are currently scheduled for September and October, with the hope of continuing to make significant progress towards an agreement. Unfortunately, Mr. Draper is heavily involved this fall as Project Lead for the rollout of the new Human Resource Information System, UKG Pro, while also the Chief Negotiator for the StFX Team currently in negotiations with the NSGEU. Hopefully he can find sufficient time to focus on negotiating a settlement with the StFXAUT.

In the meantime, Nova Scotia Labour Law and the established *Negotiations Protocol* both dictate that the terms and conditions of the 5th CA remain in force until a new CA has been finalized. Included in this are the associated Letters and Memoranda of Understanding that do not have explicit expiry dates, A key component of this for members is that the progression through the ranks or step increase, for most, occurred September 1 as outlined in the CA.

Ongoing Communications:

Barring any twists in the negotiations, the next issue of the *Bargaining Bulletin* will be distributed in late October. In the meantime, the StFXAUT Negotiating Team and the supporting cast will be hard at work to enhance the case for the best result possible while relying on the feedback from the member survey and group consultations.

Glossary (cont'd)

Public Bargaining means public disclosure of negotiation strategy or disclosure of offers and counteroffers of the possible terms of a collective bargaining agreement. Public bargaining can be construed as not bargaining in good faith, because it can hamper the ability of negotiators to make strategic compromises. Those compromises are at the core of the negotiation process that leads to a collective bargaining agreement.

Surface Bargaining means going through the motions of negotiating without any real intent to reach an agreement. Surface Bargaining can also involve making proposals that are so egregious that no reasonable party would ever agree to the terms.

Hard Bargaining is a tactic where a party refuses to make concessions in order to reach an agreement.