
BUFA Bargaining Bulletin #3 - May 14, 2020

An Employer's opening proposals in collective bargaining can give you insight into their vision for the future. In the case of Brock University's Administration, that vision, as outlined in its bargaining proposals, raises some serious red flags and reminds us of the important role our union plays in countering Administration efforts to fundamentally restructure the University in ways that would undermine educational quality, research capacity, and working conditions for faculty and professional librarians.

On May 13, 2020, negotiations between BUFA and the Administration formally got underway with both sides meeting over Zoom to exchange complete sets of non-monetary proposals.

BUFA's key priorities have been previously circulated to the membership and elaborated upon through a series of bargaining backgrounders to members. These bargaining backgrounders are available [here](#).

Here are some key highlights from the Employer's package of proposals:

- Proposed changes to Articles 19, 21, and 24 would grant the Administration the right to **replace all faculty retirements with newly created "Professional Teaching Positions" (PTP) rather than traditional tenure-track appointments**. PTPs would carry a teaching load of 8 half credits. Thus, 80% of their time would be spent on teaching and 20% spent on a combination of research and service. Faculty with PTP appointments would be eligible for tenure and promotion. However, there would be no limits to the number of PTPs within the university. Therefore, these appointments could permanently replace traditional tenure-track appointments.
- Proposed changes to Article 19 would allow all LTA positions (normal workload of 40-40-20) to be replaced by ILTA positions (80% teaching - 20% research/service).
- Proposed changes in Article 24A would grant the Administration the right to **force all faculty to teach on Friday nights and Saturdays**. Proposed changes in the same Article would grant the Administration the right to force ILTA and PTP members to teach **each day, from Monday to Saturday**, without a rest day, in every academic term.
- Proposed changes in Article 12 would **eliminate the research support money** deposited into the Professional Expense Reimbursement accounts of faculty members assigned to teach courses away from their home campus. In response to a question from the Union, the Administration revealed that the University's newly planned campus in the Hamilton-Oakville-Burlington corridor will likely result in a greater share of faculty teaching away from St. Catharines, including those outside the Faculty of Education, which currently is the Faculty with members most commonly assigned to teach outside of St. Catharines.

The Administration also proposed a series of changes to other Articles, including Policies and Practices, Discipline, Academic Freedom, Spousal/Partner Appointments, Permanence and Promotion, Library Department Heads, Performance Review, Rights and Responsibilities of Members, Leaves, Departmental and Centre Committees, and Program Committees and Program Directors.

Noticeably absent from the Administration's proposals are any language changes directly addressing two key pillars in the University's Integrated Strategic Plan – expanding research capacity and Indigenization and decolonization.

While we remain hopeful the Administration will abandon or significantly revise its extremely reckless priorities in the weeks to come, we must also be prepared in the event that members of the Administration's team dig in their heels and force a labour dispute. We will be in a much better position to assess the Administration's intention once the Parties have had an opportunity to exchange and discuss counterproposals next week.

As always, your BUFA Negotiating Team will continue to work productively and collegially towards a negotiated settlement. We will notify you of any important developments in due course.

In Solidarity,

Larry Savage, PhD

Professor, Labour Studies

BUFA Chief Negotiator

Email: lsavage@brocku.ca

Michelle Webber, PhD

Professor, Sociology

BUFA President

Email: mwebber@brocku.ca

