

Union's Comprehensive Offer for Settlement – September 27, 2017

College Employer Council has an opportunity to bring their offer to faculty directly for a vote, after it has been presented to our team and rejected. If Council believes this to be the best settlement offer they can make to faculty, they just need to ask the OLRB to authorize the forced offer vote. Instead, we see your communications to us and our members as an attempt to press the membership to pressure the team to go against the process laid out in the CCBA.

We want to be very clear: we are formally rejecting your offer and proposing an alternative to reach a settlement.

When voting in the strike mandate, our members were fully aware of management's offer of settlement (as well as the faculty team proposal). A solid majority chose to vote to back our plan and rejected management's offer.

The faculty team are serious about reaching a settlement, but we must reiterate that no settlement will be possible if the Council refuses to negotiate on issues that are of central importance to the quality and stability of the Ontario College System. The changes we are seeking in this round of bargaining are long overdue. We also believe them to be widely supported by our membership, by students, and by the public at large.

Maintaining the status quo on academic decision-making, faculty complement, and the plight of contract faculty is simply not an option for our members. However, the comprehensive proposal for settlement now before you does represent considerable movement from the Union's initial positions on these key priorities. In addition, changes made in this proposal reflect our acknowledgement of Council's concerns about cost and about the challenges of implementing system-wide changes to governance, while respecting differences between individual colleges.

Collegial Governance

Our proposal on collegial governance moves this item into a letter of understanding that forms a joint task-force to establish academic senates by the end of the new Collective Agreement. This gives time for the Council and the Union to discuss and resolve any issues in implementation, and ensures that the most effective, flexible, and collegial senate model is adopted. Collegial governance also has minimal cost to the colleges, and is arguably revenue-neutral. Cost-savings will be realized as senates replace existing College academic and advisory councils, and as faculty become more engaged in academic decision-making.

Faculty Complement

Our proposal on faculty complement also shifts this item into a letter of understanding and reduces the complement level: this marks a significant move towards settlement by the faculty team. This letter establishes a minimum ratio of full time to non-full time faculty, and ensures stability and quality in the college system. A ratio of 50/50 creates a more sustainable full time complement, while offering exceptional flexibility to the employer. In addition, phasing in the complement ratio over the life of the Collective Agreement spreads out the cost impact.

Job Security for Partial Load

Strengthening job security for partial load has no cost to the colleges, and may even result in cost savings as the administrative burden of recruiting, hiring, and training new partial load faculty is reduced. Security will also improve the stability of the system and the quality of education, as professors are given more notice and predictability in terms of course assignments. The benefits to students cannot be overstated; in addition, the positive impact on partial load working conditions will be significant.

Academic Freedom and Intellectual Property

Our streamlined articles on academic freedom and intellectual property establish the minimum standard for faculty at colleges that offer collaborative degrees with university partners, offer their own stand-alone degrees, and pursue applied research. Along with collegial governance, academic freedom is an essential requirement for post-secondary institutions engaged in these activities. This has not hampered universities nor rendered them less nimble. In addition, implementing academic freedom has absolutely no cost to the colleges. It will

only have a positive effect by improving the quality of courses and programs, faculty engagement, and the student experience. Yesterday's OCADU ratification of their settlement reinforces the trend to strengthen academic freedom language in post-secondary collective agreements.

Equal Pay for Equal Work for Partial Load

Our proposed changes to enact equal pay for equal work for partial load are directly supported by the language of Bill 148. With a \$188 million surplus in the college system in 2016/2017 alone, there are sufficient resources to offset the cost of equal pay for partial load members if only the colleges have the will.