

BARGAINING ALERT!

Action on Workload Issues

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Last year, QUFA Members identified workload as a particularly pressing concern for all faculty, librarians, and

archivists, and so QUFA committed to exploring this issue in preparation for this round of bargaining. To this end, a number of information-gathering efforts were conducted over the past year:

- First, QUFA met twice with unit heads to determine what sorts of issues they felt were important.
- Second, QUFA gathered all of the Queen's academic unit Workload Standards and made them available on one Web page.
- Third, all Faculty, Librarians, and Archivists bargaining unit Members were asked to complete two surveys on workload, and more than one-third took the time to respond. A Sessional Adjunct survey will be conducted in the fall.

The survey results clearly indicate that many QUFA Members are stretched to the limit and feel

compelled to work at an unsustainable pace. Some examples:

- Over 80% of librarians and archivists work overtime hours.
- Almost 60% of FLA adjuncts do university service work without compensation.
- Over 50% of the faculty report high or very high stress levels, with almost 40% either having sought or considered seeking professional help to cope with stress.

An overwhelming number of survey respondents submitted extensive written notes rich in detail. One major theme running through these notes is the increased administrative work that has been shifted to Members for teaching, service, and research, detracting from their ability to focus on the essentials of their careers. A majority in each group supported a review of their unit's Workload Standard, perhaps as a first step to highlight more explicitly the growing gap between the amount of work that must be done and the inadequate human resources available to do it.

ACTION

First, QUFA must and will continue to press for an increase in the number of academic staff.

Second, the Workload Subcommittee has started to review the provision in the Collective Agreement that describes what should be in the

Workload Standard (FLA Article 37.1 and especially 37.1.3) and suggest changes or additions to the QUFA Bargaining Team. Some possible suggestions:

- Workload Standards should include information about the weight attributed to graduate supervisions, and this information should be used when determining workload of Members.
- Units should keep and display a three- to five-year roster of Members' teaching and service commitments to provide a transparent running overview in order to ensure an equitable distribution of workload within the unit.

As well, the Subcommittee is developing a template Workload Standard to append to the Collective Agreement so that units will have some guidance when revising their own Workload Standards.

These are clearly initial steps only. QUFA will continue to work with Members to address workload concerns.

If you have suggestions for the Workload Subcommittee, or if you have ideas about how to address workload issues, whether through the Collective Agreement or otherwise, please contact Ramneek Pooni at workload@qufa.ca.

QUFA urges interested Members to become involved in creating positive

change through the bargaining process.

ON THE WEB

Queen's Workload Standards and the link to a list of issues to help improve the Standards can be found at http://www.qufa.ca/workload/qufa_wl_2007/workload.php



Queen's University Unit Workload Standards

We encourage you to take a look at the results of all surveys at http://www.qufa.ca/workload/flabu_wl_2007/workload.php



FLABU Workload Surveys 2007

Bargaining Alerts are archived on the QUFA Web site at <http://qufa.ca/updates/>



Bargaining Updates

If you have any questions or concerns, or if you want to make your voice heard to improve the terms and conditions of your working environment, please contact the QUFA Office in person (at 9 St Lawrence Avenue), by telephone (at ext. 32151 or 33033), or by e-mail (qufa2@queensu.ca or qufa@queensu.ca).

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QUFA encourages you to print out a copy of this Bargaining Alert and post it in a visible space in your department or unit. Thank you!

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