

**Special General Meeting
November 9, 2016**

Introduce Moderator/Quorum Check

- Moderator: Stephen Smith
- Stephen: Introductions
 - Tamara Jamaspishvili, Equity Officer
 - Stéphanie (Stéfy) McKnight, Information Officer
 - Lesley Jamieson, Vice President Community Relations
 - Yagya Paudel, Co-Chief Steward
 - Abigail (Abbey) Agresta, Treasurer
 - Silja Freitag, Vice President Postdoctoral Scholars
 - Alexandru Sonoc, Health and Safety Officer
 - Hannah Johnston, Co-Chief Steward
 - Craig Berggold, President
- Quorum Check: 38

PSAC Local 901 Equity Statement

- Tamara

Unit 2 Postdocs Strike Committee Elections

- Report from **Silja**:
 - Bargaining team members:
 - Tamara
 - Jessica
 - Bargaining committee members:
 - Abigail
 - Silja
 - Christian
 - Tonight we are electing a strike committee
 - Started last year with figuring out demands for collective agreement for this year
 - Got information through member surveys, etc.
 - Have bargained with employer, had conciliation, strike member vote
 - We are now ready to elect a strike committee
- **MaryAnne Laurico**:
 - On the bargaining team:
 - Had a day of conciliation
 - We are pretty close to a deal now, but we are playing around with a specific amount of money
 - University does not like some of what we are asking for as it may break trends, which they do not want to be responsible for
 - We have another date set where we will hear from the university in response to us
 - Strike committee is going to be made up of postdocs
 - Committee will get to decide what the protocols are
 - Protocols for accessing live animals, scientific experiments

- Who has access to money that is reserved for strikes (hardship funds, etc.)
- **Frederick (Freddy) Langshaw (CRO):**
 - In regards to the strike committee, people that volunteer will be elected
 - If there are disputes regarding this, make them heard
- Question: How many members will be part of the committee?
- **Freddy:**
 - Reading from bylaws: President, and at least 2 other members in good standing
- **Craig:**
 - Bylaws say exec committee will appoint members of strike committee
 - However, Craig would like to get input from members in unit 2 regarding this, and then the executive committee will appoint them
 - Those who will volunteer will be appointed (process of acclamation)
- **Szymon:**
 - Is it the strike committee that will vote on whether there is a strike?
- **Craig:**
 - We asked for strike mandate
 - We then said we would appoint a strike committee
 - Job actions we take will be discussed and planned at the strike committee
 - How will we do job actions, what steps will we take
 - For example, does the strike start with everyone calling in sick, going out on the picket line, etc.
 - Anyone who has concerns should be involved in discussion so we can determine how to go about this
 - We also need to look at the defense fund, to help members who will be most affected by the strike
 - If job action is taken benefits will continue
 - If you withdraw labour and take part in strike you will receive 75 dollars a day
 - All of these things will be discussed by the strike committee
- **Szymon:**
 - Would like to be part of committee in order to provide diversity
- **Craig:**
 - A series of strike captains will be trained on Monday
 - As well, strike committee will be trained
- **MaryAnne:**
 - There will be lots of materials for training
 - Postdoc duties vary between departments
 - The work you will be able to do in terms of job action will vary greatly
 - We want diverse input from members in different departments to encompass this on the committee
- **Jessica:**
 - On bargaining team and committee
 - Would like to volunteer for strike committee
- **Abbey:**
 - Would like to volunteer for strike committee
 - From history department
 - Teaching is part of her postdoc, can bring this perspective
- **Silja:**
 - Would like to volunteer
- **Craig:**

- Wants an understanding of different perspectives in terms of job action
 - Szymon - Science
 - Jessica - Social
 - Abbey - Humanities
 - Silja - Natural science
- **Mohsen:**
 - Volunteers for committee
 - Applied science
- **Freddy:**
 - Does this strike committee suit everyone? Does it represent you the best?
 - Unit 2 raise your hand to approve this
- Majority agrees, committee approved
- Nobody abstained

Unit 1 TA/TF Bargaining Committee:

- **Stephen:**
 - Unit 1 goes into bargaining in April
 - Looking for bargaining committee
- **Craig:**
 - Detailing agenda for this discussion
 - Bargaining committee for unit 1 is made up of 7 members
 - 3 are executive members: President, Co-Chief Steward, Equity Officer
 - Election for remaining 4 spots - 1 from each area of study
 - Proposing that in addition we create a pool of alternates, of everyone who wants to be a part of this
 - If we have a very long process of bargaining; we need people on reserve
 - Bargaining committee elects the bargaining TEAM (3 people) that sits at the table and negotiates
 - 3 executive members are on committee because they have had the most experience with handling grievances so they know what is going on, and can share this with the bargaining committee
 - Overall, this is an opportunity to express your concerns, needs, and wants

Discussion/Member Input

- **Stephen:**
 - Please state your name and department
 - Invites members to provide input
- **Chris:**
 - Sociology
 - Need to improve accessibility in buildings for people with disabilities
- **Silja:**
 - Higher wages
- **Alexander:**
 - Mechanical Engineering
 - Taking a course that has a course coordinator and multiple professors
 - Nobody knows who his actual supervisor is
 - Wasn't provided with a contract so he had to make his own contract

- Professors did not prepare adequately so he had to do some of their work (marking schemes, etc.)
 - Wants greater clarity regarding what is a professor's job and what is a TA's job
- **Marshall:**
 - Chemistry
 - Idea of OVERTIME
 - Standard ways of tracking overtime for TAs and actually compensating them
 - Duty of professors vs. TAs regarding working hours
- **Stéfy:**
 - Would be strategic if we could add a cap of hours we can do in one week in our new CA
 - It should be okay to average, but there should be a cap on averaging
- **Alexander:**
 - Civil Engineering
 - Commitment from university to improve OnQ/Moodle
- **Craig:**
 - Are you interested in paid training for OnQ/Moodle?
 - Not a random workshop, but actual paid training
- **Member:**
 - Physics
 - Confused about higher wages
 - There is a cap salary that you can have. Will they lower the other part of your salary to keep your stipend the same? Is this being taken into account?
- **Craig:**
 - There is a point in the CA, that any increase in TA wages cannot subsidize other parts of the contract
 - Chemistry department recently had this grievance and students were compensated
 - We saw that the wage increase for TAs was the exact decrease in RA wage, so students were compensated
 - We are now going to start rolling this out over all the departments
 - This was all in the past 4 months; only got compensated in the past month
- **Member:**
 - Physics
 - Had a similar situation
 - If this happened in the past will I still get compensated even though I am no longer a student?
- **Craig:**
 - Talk to Co-Chief Steward to discuss this
- **Sogol:**
 - Chemistry
 - Now a post doc, I don't believe I got compensated for my previous work as per discussion
- **Craig:**
 - May have been a trick by the employer because your position changed
- **Jared:**
 - Philosophy
 - Concern from previous CA
 - It seems there is about 100 000 dollars per year to support health and dental of members

- This money was handed off to external organization and it wasn't clear how the money would benefit our members or how it was being handled
 - We should keep the money IN HOUSE in the future, so that we don't have this issue again
- **Craig:**
 - The decision to give 100 000 dollars for health was made at a general meeting by the membership
 - Money was given to the SGPS
 - Represents 10% of the total fund of the health and dental plan of grad students
 - When the membership decided to give this to a 1 million dollar plan, we increased the benefits that didn't exist for things like eyeglasses, to ALL graduate students
 - The logic behind this is that while you may not be a member of our union right now, you may be in the future and we want you to have access to good benefits during your ENTIRE time as a grad student, not just during your contract time
- **Jared:**
 - Philosophy
 - I do not want to work over Christmas, and if I do I want to be paid overtime
- **Suhaylah:**
 - Chemistry
 - No longer allowing the university to subsidize stipends when a student wins a large scholarship
 - This is separate from wage increase
- **Stéfy:**
 - Selection System of who gets a TAship
 - People with more experience are getting more TAships, while others aren't
 - HIRING PRIORITY SYSTEM
- **Postdoc Member:**
 - Phd in physics
 - In physics if you get a scholarship from outside of the department you have a decrease in your TAship
 - The idea is that you dedicate more time to research with this
 - Some people might be relieved by this
 - Need to remember that it is good to fight for this right, but some people might prefer to not TA
- **Craig:**
 - In Chemistry, people were very upset because they were forced to do a second TAship
- **John:**
 - Geography
 - Overpayment is a concern
 - Different ways of getting around overpayment issues
 - Have other locals dealt with this? Have agreements been made?
- **Laura:**
 - Chemistry
 - Who gets to approve/sign the contracts?
 - One of the professors who was supposed to sign contract was out of town so no contract was received until a few weeks into the term
- **Amy:**
 - Chemistry

- First aid training available for TAs
- Particularly for labs
- You are warned that some students may faint, etc., but there is no training available
- **Hannah:**
 - Geography
 - Need some sort of clear policy so that once contracts are over, if there is follow up work (contested grades, etc.) there is something in place
- **Craig:**
 - Childcare bursary
 - In some academic locals, unions have won large amounts of money for childcare
 - Would like to see some kind of access to childcare benefits
 - If postdocs win childcare benefits, TAs and TFs will be the only working group on campus who do not have childcare benefits
 - We have made a commitment of 20 000 dollars for this as a UNION, would like to see employer make a substantial contribution

Member Survey

- **Silja:**
 - It is up to unit 1 to clarify if there are more issues out there that are important to members
 - Postdocs did this by doing a member survey and face to face interviews with members
 - Figured out the top 5 or 6 demands to take to bargaining
 - This is quite a process, so we need to start with this as soon as possible
 - There should be different avenues to get in touch with members

Presentation by Jawara Gairey

- **Jawara:**
 - Works with PSAC
 - Negotiator for this round of bargaining
 - Going back to member survey
 - It is important to have a mechanism to engage membership to get feedback as to what members concerns are
 - PSAC can assist with this process
 - Unit 1 has an assigned research officer through PSAC
 - He can assist in developing a survey for the local, and data can go back to him to be processed
 - Bargaining process:
 - There are rules and outlines for bargaining
 - Start process 6-8 months before CA expires
 - Gather info through membership surveys, assess that info, develop a consensus around areas of priority
 - Through election of bargaining committee, you will come up with priorities for change
 - Generally, when you enter into renewal agreements you only target areas of priority for negotiation

- There will be some overlap with areas
- May have 10-20 proposals depending on committee when we enter bargaining
- Here we are going to elect the bargaining TEAM
 - TEAM has the power to make decisions around the table with the employer (whether or not agreement is in the best interests of the members)
 - The team does not go back and forth between membership and committee regarding proposals, the decisions are made solely by the team
 - There are reasons for this:
 - If information is put out before we have an agreement, may result in bad faith with the employer
 - Want to make sure that info going to members is set in stone
 - The team has the power to make changes with the employer regarding the agreement
 - As a team member, you will be trained, compensated for time
- With this sector, we have made some significant gains in the past, there is always room for improvement
- We don't always get everything we want in bargaining, but we can get some improvements every round of bargaining
- You can look at other agreements that are more mature (York, Western, UofT) and see the benefits of more rounds of bargaining/older agreements
- Advocating:
 - Team will make decision regarding agreement
 - Agreement will then be brought back to members
 - Members will decide whether they will accept the agreement or not
 - If members choose to reject the tentative agreement that the team brings back, that is their strike vote!
 - Ratification vote is your strike vote at the same time
- Will probably serve notice to bargain around march to the employer, and then commence actual bargaining
- **Craig:**
 - How long did the last bargaining take at the table?
- **Jawar:**
 - Probably about 6 months
- **Craig:**
 - Many of the contracts are over April 30th
 - This will be a commitment that will take us through the summer, consider whether or not you are available
 - It is unfortunate that our contract ends at the end of the regular school year, when we no longer have that much leverage
- **Jawara:**
 - For this reason, we may consider starting bargaining in the fall (when we have far more TA/TF contracts) so that we have more leverage
- **Jared:**
 - Philosophy
 - What is the role of the bargaining committee members during bargaining?
- **Jawara:**
 - Sometimes there is conflict between the roles

- It is clear that the TEAM and the COMMITTEE need to be distinguished
- Recommendation is that if you want to be on the TEAM, don't be on the COMMITTEE as well
- **Craig:**
 - Only putting together the COMMITTEE today
 - For this election as many people as want should run, whoever are the top vote getters in each of those areas should be the representative for each of the 4 areas of study
 - After this, we will have a pool of people who want to be on the committee as ALTERNATES
 - Once the committee has been formed, and demands have been voted on
- **JR:**
 - Can team only be elected from the 7 members of the committee?
- **Craig:**
 - The idea of having a pool is that if someone drops out, there are people on reserve to choose from
- **Freddy:**
 - Do we have a cap of the pool?
- **Craig:**
 - Pool isn't even in the bylaws, so no

Election for Bargaining Committee Members

- **Freddy:**
 - Looking for 4 members to join the 3 executive members who will be on the committee
 - Looking for people who represent the different disciplines and divisions
 - Start taking nominees
- JR Nominated for social sciences
- Alexander nominated for engineering
- Marshall nominated for science
- Stéfy nominated for humanities
- **Ben:**
 - Social Science
 - Interested for alternate
 - From industrial relations
- **Suhaylah:**
 - Chemistry
 - Interested for alternate
- **Craig:**
 - Considering the OTHER Co-Chief Steward (not part of the 3 exec members) be an alternate
- **Yagya:**
 - Volunteers to join alternate pool
 - Representing sciences (chemistry)
- This means Hannah will be the executive member
- Unit 1 voting for positions:
 - Humanities: Stéfy
 - Social Science: JR
 - Natural Science: Marshall
 - Engineering: Alexander

- Alternate Pool:
 - Ben
 - Suhaylah
 - Yagya

Budget Report

- **Abbey:**
 - Has only been in this position for 1 month, so she is not fully up to date, joined by Craig
 - **Craig:**
 - The main thing you need to know about the budget is that there was a SURPLUS at the end of the year
 - On memberships dues we budgeted 80 000 dollars, but took in 90+ thousand
 - Whenever you discuss a budget expense over 500 dollars at a GM it needs to then be approved by the Stewards Council
 - Generally, we are in a healthy financial situation
 - We have about 100 000 dollars in our chequing account that is ongoing (from multiple years of surplus)
 - On top of that we have 120 thousand dollars additional fund that is our STRIKE DEFENCE fund for unit 1
 - We are now also accruing a second defense fund for unit 2
 - Defense funds are kept in separate accounts
 - We process about 120 000 dollars from SGPS and us for benefits
 - We are doing the budget NOW because we collect membership dues 3 months late (Budget starts at the end of April; we receive the April dues in August)
 - Need to collect dues before we alter anything
 - This years spending:
 - In the line items that were underspent last year, we are asking for approval for a revised budget
 - Under Health and Safety:
 - We are in renegotiations with SGPS
 - Before we give them money again we want outstanding issues fixed
 - Example: international students have been complaining about transparency of decisions made with the SGPS
 - We now have a position on the SGPS bursary committee
 - We are trying to get more transparency for these decisions
 - Staff member salary:
 - Staff person is now an employee, not a contractor
 - Thus, our contributions need to be increased
 - OVERALL DESCRIPTIONS OF HIGHLIGHTED LINE ITEMS THAT ARE INCREASED/DECREASED IN THE BUDGET
- Motion to approve revised budget:
- **Jared:**
 - Philosophy
 - Moves to approve budget
 - Seconded by Yagya, chemistry
- **Alexander:**

- Is there a reason the funds were not spent last year? Is there a specific area that did not cost as much as we thought?
- **Craig:**
 - Surplus was because we collected more member dues than we thought
- Budget approved

Announcements

- **Silja:**
 - Motion to adjourn
 - Seconded by Abbey

SGM Nov. 9, 2016 Attendees:

Last Name	First Name	Department	Unit	Email
Abdelqader	Majd	Physics	Postdoc	ma65@queensu.ca
Agresta	Abigail	History	Postdoc	abbey.agresta@gmail.com
Arnaud	Quentin	Physics	Postdoc	q.arnaud@queensu.ca
Berggold	Craig	Cultural Studies		
Bezemer	Cor-Paul	CS	Postdoc	paul.bezemer@queensu.ca
Bolkhari	Hadiseh	Civil Eng	Unit 2	h_bolkhari@yahoo.com
Borjian	Sogol	Chemistry	Postdoc	bsb1@queensu.ca
Bucevac	Dusan	Mechanical	Postdoc	db160@queensu.ca
Collotta	Massimo	Geography	Postdoc	massimo.collotta@queensu.ca
Elliston	Chris	Sociology	TA	16cje1@queensu.ca
Freitag	Silja	RBMS	Postdoc	
Harwood	Brennan	Philosophy	TA	13bh11@queensu.ca
Houston	Jared	Philosophy	Unit 1	jared.houston@queensu.ca
Idowu	Loretta	Chemical Eng	TA	lai1@queensu.ca
Jamieson	Lesley	Philosophy	TA	lesleyjamieson2@gmail.com
Johnston	Hannah	Geography	Unit 1	8hesj@queensu.ca
Kamaha	Alvine	Physics	Postdoc	ak107@queensu.ca
Kamandar	Mohsen	Physics	Postdoc	m.kamandar@queensu.ca
Langshaw	Fred	Sociology	Unit 1	fkf@queensu.ca
Laverdure	Laura	Chemistry	Unit 1	lbl@queensu.ca
MacLean	Amy	Chemistry	TA	am277@queensu.ca
Maneck	Szymon	Physics	Postdoc	szymon.manecki@queensu.ca
McKague	Cathleen	English	Postdoc	cmm19@queensu.ca
McKnight	Stéphanie	Cultural Studies	Unit 1	
Merolli	Jessica	Political Studies	Postdoc	jm360@queensu.ca
Norris	Matt		TA	13mn27@queensu.ca
Ocran	Edwin	DBMS	TA	eko@queensu.ca
Pannese	Eric	Civil Eng	TA	emp2@queensu.ca

Paudel	Yagya	Chemistry	TA	
Peacocke	Emma	English	Postdoc	emma.peacocke@queensu.ca
Rey	Alexander	Civil Eng	TA	a.rey@queensu.ca
Rose	John	Geography	TA & TF	jwlrose@gmail.com
Sequeira	Suhaylah	Chemistry	TA	suhaylahsequeira@gmail.com
Smith	Stephen	History	Unit 1	srsmith@mta.ca
Sonoc	Alexandru	Mechanical Eng	Unit 1	
Timmermans	Marshall	Chemistry	TA	mlt3@queensu.ca
Tolsa	Cristian	Classics	Postdoc	cristian.tolsa@queensu.ca
Turner	Benjamin	Industrial Relations	TA	benjamin.turner@queensu.ca
Wu	Yihan	Biology	TA	yw35@queensu.ca
Zhang	Xiaohe	Physics	Postdoc	xiaohe.zhang@queensu.ca