



*What is happening at the table right now?*

## BARGAINING NEGOTIATIONS FAQ SHEET

### *What is the bargaining process?*

The bargaining process is where representatives of our Union and our Employer exchange proposals to change or renew the working conditions outlined in our Collective Agreement. Our Union builds its proposals from direct input from our membership. When all issues are discussed and changes agreed, the parties have a tentative agreement. This tentative agreement of any changes negotiated during bargaining are subject to final member approval in the form of a ratification vote.

### *What are we bargaining for?*

Some of our demands include:

- Additional Year of Employment Guarantee
- Mental Health Support and Rebate Funds
- Gender Affirmation Leave, Violence Leave
- Mandatory and Paid Anti-Racist Training and Sexual Violence Prevention Training
- Equipment Allowance
- Professional Development Fund
- Increase to Contract Period for TFs
- Revised Accommodation Process

In previous bargaining cycles, our union has won access to paid sick leave, paid trainings, our current hourly wages rate and benefits! There is strength in collective bargaining!



Our Bargaining Team has been meeting with our Employer since May 2021. Much of our meetings through the summer were focused on the COVID Letter of Understanding. Currently, our non-monetary proposals have been tabled. Queen's has been stonewalling us on several issues and has been unwilling to meaningfully engage with us on the issues raised.

To date, Queen's has refused to demonstrate leadership in addressing the **94 Calls to action** and move beyond the bare minimum provincially-legislated when it comes to September 30th – **National Day for Truth and Reconciliation**.

In the rise of awareness about misogyny and rape culture on University Campuses, we have also asked for: the **removal of time limits for filing sexual violence or harassment grievances**; that no member be penalized in their student or employment status as a result of suffering work-related sexual, gender or gender identity harassment; and **mandatory paid training on sexual harassment and sexual assault**. Queen's has failed to meaningfully engage beyond the minimums set out in their Policy.

When it comes to our **mental health**, Queen's believes access to Employee and Family Assistance Program is generously adequate, but they don't want to enshrine the provision in our Collective Agreement. We remain unsure how this is an appropriate response to the mental health crisis on campus. We've asked them to **recognize and implement the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety**.

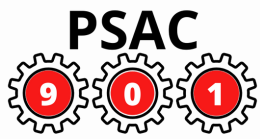
to recognize the impact of racism on mental health and commit to implement rules and practices to address the impact, and to create a Mental Health Fund for our members to access.

But the University is refusing to meaningfully engage or acknowledge racism as a health and safety issue. And when it comes to anti-racism training and education, they insist their promotional materials are sufficient. We've asked for measures to help unroot racism. We've **asked for mandatory training, and for the creation of an "Anti-Racist Pedagogy Project"** dedicated to developing and implementing tools, materials, workshops on anti-racist pedagogy in the classroom, syllabi, and methodologies. We've asked for RAships to do the work of the Project jointly with the University. We've asked for a mechanism to ensure work performed to update curricula to include authors and researchers from equity-seeking groups or to remove harmful content, is considered paid work.

When you told us you were experiencing issues getting an Accommodation for the work you perform, or about the **barriers you face getting an Individualized Emergency Response Plan**, we asked Queen's to do better. They are insisting there is nothing wrong with the Accommodation process. We need them to meaningfully engage with us about the barriers we have identified.

**We need collective action by graduate student workers to rectify this attitude! Get involved here:**





# BARGAINING NEGOTIATIONS FAQ SHEET

## ***What is an impasse?***

During the bargaining process, our Union and Employer can reach disagreement on an issue or proposal. If either side is unable to work past a disagreement, then the parties are at impasse.

If there is impasse on all issues, either party can apply for the assistance of a Ministry of Labour appointed Conciliator. A Conciliator is usually appointed within five business days of application, and meets with the Union and Employer to help reach a tentative agreement. During the Conciliation process, if parties again reach impasse, then either party can apply to the Ministry of Labour for a “No Board” Report.

At 12:01am on the 17th day following the issue of a “No Board” Report, the Union is in a legal strike position, and the Employer is in a legal lockout position.

## ***What is a strike mandate?***

When there is impasse during the negotiations process, our Negotiating Team may ask our membership to support them in the form of providing a strike mandate. Members would be able to offer this support by voting “Yes” to strike should impasse continue. Having a strike mandate is not taken lightly by our Union and demonstrates to our Employer that our membership is behind our Team.

## ***What is a strike?***

“A strike is when unionized workers withhold their labour in an effort to pressure their employer into meeting their demands. Workers go on strike after negotiations have broken down or stalled. The goal is to compel the employer to return to the bargaining table and address workers’ demands. There are different types of strikes that serve different purposes. They may escalate in their intensity.” (PSAC Strike Manual 11)

## ***Does Queen's fear a 901 strike mandate?***

A withdrawal of labour by TAs, RAs and TFs is sufficient to bring academic life at Queen's to a standstill! This is an outcome the employer seeks to avoid.

## ***Are we going on strike?***

No one starts negotiations with the goal of labour withdrawal. The goal is to bargain a fair and equitable Collective Agreement. Only when our unit is in a legal strike/lockout position would we be able to withdraw our labour, and any labour action is determined, democratically, by our membership. Our success in the negotiating process depends directly on the involvement, enthusiasm and determination of our teaching assistant and teaching fellow members. We must continue to demonstrate our seriousness about improving our working conditions. A strike is a measure of last resort, which we may need to take in order to secure gains at the negotiating table.

## ***How can I get involved?***

We are in the process of organizing actions to let Queen's know that we are serious about the demands that we have placed before them, and that casual stonewalling is an unacceptable bargaining tactic. Your support in organizing and your participation in these actions would be the loudest vote of support in this moment. **Please fill out this survey to let us know what capacity you can support in!**



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**Public Service Alliance of Canada**

**Local 901**

**Queen’s University**

**613 533-6000, ext. 77010**

