

2006 Membership Questionnaire Results

By Jill Flohil, YUFA Staff

14 Feb 07 – Salary & Benefits and Workload issues emerged as high priorities for YUFA members in the March 2006 Membership Questionnaire (Pages [1-14](#) and [15-20](#)), the results of which formed the basis of the Bargaining Priorities Subcommittee's report to Executive, which in turn informed YUFA's [Primary Negotiating Positions](#).

The Questionnaire provides the membership with a way to have their voices heard. But it is, by no means, the only avenue the membership has to be heard. Throughout 2004-2005, the Contract Review Committee met with many YUFA constituencies and heard from many members via email. The Bargaining Priorities Subcommittee as well received many emails from members.

The Questionnaire was sent to all 1350 YUFA members with 341 responding, a response rate that is in line with previous surveys. In addition to the survey, the Bargaining Priorities Subcommittee created an information [Webpage](#) designed to assist members who wanted to find out more about the issues.

The Questionnaire was organized as follows:

- [Salary & Benefits](#),
- [Workload](#),
- [Equity](#),
- [Research Support](#),
- [Working Conditions](#),
- [Mandatory Retirement](#),
- [Recruitment & Retention](#), and
- [Organizing & Respondent Profiles](#).

While much of the data was quantitative in nature, there were also many qualitative comments. Though more difficult to report on, such comments do provide meaningful insights into members' priorities.

In order not to prejudice ongoing negotiations, YUFA has waited until the ratification of the 16th Collective Agreement to post these results.

[Priorities for 2006 Negotiations](#)

Salary & Benefits:

Q 1.1 Several bargaining frameworks could be adopted to address YUFA's concerns about members' salaries. Please rank the proposals below by how strongly you support them, where 1 = most strongly', 5 = 'least strongly'. [See table](#).

- The same percentage base salary increase for all members

- Declining percentage base salary adjustment so as to provide a greater salary increase at the lower end of the pay scale
- Raise the salary floors, which set the minimum salaries for the various ranks. Current floors are unrealistically low and don't reflect actual entry-level salaries.
- Increase the Progress Through the Ranks (PTR) increment, currently at \$2340
- Introduce a cost of living adjustment

Q. 1.2 Please rank the following factors in order of the importance you think they ought to be given in determining YUFA members' salaries, where 1 = 'most important', 6 = 'least important'. [See table.](#)

- Rank
- Merit
- Year of appointment at York
- Years of professional experience
- Dean's/Principal's/University Librarian's discretion
- Market factors (discipline, Faculty of primary appointment, supply and demand)

Q. 1.3 YUFA members' Professional Expense Reimbursement (PER) allowance is \$1250. Common PER expenditures include books, journal subscriptions, computing supplies, professional dues, and conference expenses, all of which have increased at a rate faster than increases to the PER. Academic staff at many other universities have higher PER funds. Should YUFA bargain an increase?

- Yes, it's a high priority: 59.8%
- Yes, but it's a relatively low priority: 36%
- No, it's not a priority: 4.2%

Q. 1.4 Are the current procedures for distributing merit funds fair and transparent?

- Yes: 33.1%
- No: 39.9%
- No opinion: 27%

Q. 1.5 Should YUFA try to reduce the proportion of the overall settlement going into merit and marketability funds and put the money back into the general salary pool?

- Yes, it's a high priority: 45%
- Yes, but it's a relatively low priority: 18.2%
- No, it's not a priority: 36.8%

Q. 1.6 Should YUFA try to increase the number of PTR increments at the time of promotion to Associate or Full Professor? Currently, promotion entitles members to only one PTR increment in addition to the one received as part of our negotiated annual raise.

- Yes, it's a high priority: 21.1%

- Yes, but it's a relatively low priority: 47.4%
- No, it's not a priority: 31.6%

Q. 1.7 The YUFA overload rate has not increased since 1991. Although YUFA has always advocated keeping our overload rate lower than the corresponding CUPE 3903 rate (roughly 75%), the YUFA rate has now fallen to less than 65% of that rate and will be only 60% by the end of CUPE's current contract if YUFA does not increase its rate. Should YUFA negotiate an increase to the overload rate?

- Yes, it's a high priority: 27.7%
- Yes, but it's a relatively low priority: 49.7%
- No, it's not a priority: 22.6%

Q. 1.8 The following are possible improvements to our benefits coverage: [See table](#).

Q. 1.9 YUFA members have long complained that parking at York is increasingly expensive and inaccessible. How important is it to you that YUFA negotiate a parking and commuting benefit?

- Yes, it's a high priority: 45.2%
- Yes, but it's a relatively low priority: 31%
- No, it's not a priority: 23.8%

Q. 1.10 What percentage of the salaries/benefit package would you like to be devoted to the following areas: Increasing salaries; Addressing salary equity issues for people who have anomalously low salaries; Merit; Marketability; Increasing Benefits? Your figures should add up to 100%. [See table](#).

YUFA will be negotiating new and improved post-retirement benefits for retired members, including for those holding Special Renewable Contracts.

Workload:

Q. 2.1 Currently, there is variation in 'normal teaching load' across Faculties / units. Should YUFA negotiate a maximum teaching load of 2.5 courses for all faculty members in the professorial stream?

- Yes, it's a high priority: 51.6%
- Yes, but it's a relatively low priority: 22.9%
- No, it's not a priority: 25.5%

Q. 2.2 Would you say your workload has increased, decreased or stayed the same in the past three years?

- Increased: 57.8%

- Stayed the same: 28.3%
- Decreased: 3.3%
- I have not yet been here three years: 10.5%

Q. 2.3 Have you been asked to increase enrolments in any of your courses in the last three years?

- Yes: 44.6%
- No: 42.2%
- N/A: 13.1%

Q. 2.4 Which of the following describes the amount of uncompensated graduate supervision in which you are normally engaged?

- Little or none: 40.7%
- Moderate: 34.6%
- Heavy: 24.7%

Q. 2.5 Please indicate all of the following statements that fit your experience at York: [See table.](#)

Q. 2.6 Please indicate which of the following teaching-related activities you have engaged in during the last three years and whether you have received credit for them. [See table.](#)

Q. 2.7 YUFA members have been asked to take on added teaching/service responsibilities to cover for colleagues on various leaves. Indicate whether your workload has been added to by any of the following and whether YUFA should negotiate credit for these activities. [See table.](#)

Indicate whether the increase was to:

- Teaching: 19.5%
- Service: 37.2%
- Both: 43.4%

Q. 2.8 When the Employer cancels ‘under-enrolled courses’ just prior to the beginning of the term in which they are scheduled, faculty members often do not receive adequate credit for the time spent preparing the cancelled course and must make it up in a future term. Should YUFA negotiate a stronger course cancellation policy?

- Yes, it’s a high priority: 27%
- Yes, but it’s a relatively low priority: 46.9%
- No, it’s not a priority: 26.1%

Such a policy should include:		
	Yes	No Answer
Restriction on the date by which courses can be cancelled	57.4%	42.6%

Remuneration for preparation done	59.8%	40.2%
Restriction on enrolment thresholds for cancellation	45.1%	54.9%
Other	5% provided written comments	

Q. 2.9 Appendix P of the Collective Agreement provides for stipends and course release for a number of academic administrative positions (e.g., Chair, Director, etc.). Are there any permanent administrative positions that should be added to this list (e.g., Chair of the Research Ethics Review Committee or Chair of Senate)? If so, please name. Are there any time or task specific academic administrative activities that should be added to the list (e.g., coordinating program reviews, curricular redesign in light of restructuring or amalgamation)? If so, please name.

- 95 YUFA members provided written comments.

Q. 2.10 Should YUFA negotiate an increase to the stipend rates in Appendix P?

- Yes, it's a high priority: 34.1%
- Yes, but it's a relatively low priority: 47.2%
- No, it's not a priority: 18.6%

Should YUFA negotiate an increase in the minimum course releases in Appendix P?

- Yes, it's a high priority: 36.8%
- Yes, but it's a relatively low priority: 43.6%
- No, it's not a priority: 19.6%

Q. 2.11 We can anticipate significant restructuring during the term of the next Collective Agreement, resulting in increases to members' service loads. Should YUFA negotiate a policy ensuring that such work is recognized?

- Yes, it's a high priority: 61.8%
- Yes, but it's a relatively low priority: 29.4%
- No, it's not a priority: 8.8%

Equity:

Q. 3.1 To what extent do you agree with the following statement? Our AA programme is working well in terms of diversifying our faculty with regard to the four target groups of women, visible minorities, Aboriginal persons, and persons with disabilities. 1 = 'strongly agree', 2 = 'somewhat agree', 3 = 'somewhat disagree', and 4 = 'strongly disagree'. [See table.](#)

- Women
- Aboriginal persons
- Visible minorities
- Persons with disabilities

If you answered (3) or (4) to any of the above, how would you describe the problems with our AA programme? Do you have any ideas for solutions? If you run out of room on this page, please continue your comments on the last page with the label '3.1'.

- 29% provided written comments.

Q. 3.2 Our AA programme currently specifies a goal of at least 40% women in all units (Article 12.21). Given the diversity of our student body and the population in the GTA, would you support specific goals for hiring visible and ethnic minorities, and Aboriginal persons for this round of bargaining?

- Yes: 32.7%
- No: 48.7%
- Don't know: 18.6%

Q. 3.3 Would you support including lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered faculty and librarians as an equity-seeking group in our AA programme?

- Yes: 27%
- No: 55.6%
- Don't know: 17.5%

Q. 3.4 Our AA programme requires that Affirmative Action Representatives attend workshops organized by the Joint Committee on Affirmative Action. Should YUFA negotiate a policy under which other members of hiring committees or tenure and promotion committees are required to attend such workshops? Please indicate yes or no.

	Yes	No
Hiring committees	51.6%	48.4%
T&P committees	41.6%	58.4%
Other committees	7.6% provided written comments	

Q. 3.5 Since 1997 YUFA has been engaged in an ongoing pay equity exercise with the Employer, which will end with the termination of the current Collective Agreement. One possible response is to negotiate a new pay equity agreement and fund that would address low salary and pension issues. Another is to use the anomalies fund to correct inequities as they develop. The latter response would require negotiating a practice by which all salaries are analysed for emerging inequities on an annual basis.

Do you support YUFA negotiating a new policy to ensure pay equity in the new Collective Agreement?

- Yes, it's a high priority: 46.4%
- Yes, but it's a relatively low priority: 36%
- No, it's not a priority: 17.7%

Q. 3.6 For members with a disability or special needs, please briefly answer the following questions below or on the last page with the label '3.6':

- What barriers do you perceive with respect to identifying yourself as having a disability and seeking accommodation in the workplace for your disability?
- If you have had to request an accommodation for a disability (long or short term), were your needs adequately addressed?
- What sort of improvement to the accommodation process should YUFA negotiate?

- 3% provided written comments.

Q. 3.7 Article 26.14 stipulates that the Employer support the York University Co-operative Daycare Centre. Some members have asked YUFA to negotiate similar support for the Lee Wiggins Daycare Centre, because it provides part-time daycare. Should YUFA negotiate such a policy?

- Yes, it's a high priority: 26.4%
- Yes, but it's a relatively low priority: 43.8%
- No, it's not a priority: 29.9%

Q. 3.8 Members are entitled to 52 weeks of parental leave (pregnancy or primary caregiver). Currently, members get full pay for the first 17 weeks, after which they must apply for Employment Insurance (EI) benefits. During the last round of bargaining, YUFA successfully negotiated an Employer-paid top-up to Employment Insurance (EI) benefits resulting in an additional three weeks of parental leave at 100% salary. If taken, the remaining 32 weeks become a leave of absence without pay. This limits members to just their EI benefits. Many unions have provisions in their contracts requiring employers to make up some of the difference between the EI amount and members' regular earnings, some up to 90% or more of regular earnings. Would you support YUFA again negotiating improvements to parental leaves (Art. 19.09)?

- Yes, it's a high priority: 27.7%
- Yes, but it's a relatively low priority: 43.3%
- No, it's not a priority: 29%

Q. 3.9 Would you support YUFA negotiating flexible working arrangements to accommodate such things as family responsibilities (e.g., reduced load, job sharing, flex time?)

- Yes, it's a high priority: 31.9%
- Yes, but it's a relatively low priority: 48.9%
- No, it's not a priority: 19.2%

Research Support:

Q. 4.1 Various funds are provided to support the conducting and disseminating of research (Articles 19 and 25.08). Are these research funds adequate? [See table.](#)

Q. 4.2 Are there significant research-related activities which you have

a. funded at your own expense?

- i. Yes: 59.5%
- ii. No: 40.5%

b. declined due to lack of funds?

- i. Yes: 49.4%
- ii. No: 50.6%

Q. 4.3 Changes to the Computer Renewal Program have removed the option to ‘buyout’, retain, or control how your present computer is redeployed even if you have added to or upgraded it. Should YUFA negotiate a more flexible policy?

- Yes, it’s a high priority: 41.4%
- Yes, but it’s a relatively low priority: 42.3%
- No, it’s not a priority: 16.3%

Q. 4.4 Has graduate supervision limited the time you have available for research?

- Yes: 50.7%
- No: 38.5%
- Don’t know: 10.8%

Q. 4.5 Would you support enriching the credits for various types of graduate supervision under Appendix O?

- Yes, it’s a high priority: 50.3%
- Yes, but it’s a relatively low priority: 37.1%
- No, it’s not a priority: 12.6%

Should YUFA negotiate a simpler formula for calculating graduate supervision credits under Appendix O?

- Yes, it’s a high priority: 43.1%
- Yes, but it’s a relatively low priority: 38.3%
- No, it’s not a priority: 18.6%

Should YUFA negotiate graduate supervision credits for retirees?

- Yes, it’s a high priority: 21.7%
- Yes, but it’s a relatively low priority: 41.6%
- No, it’s not a priority: 36.7%

Q. 4.6 A principal support for university-level research is sabbatical leave. Currently, members receive only 80% of their regular salaries for second and subsequent sabbaticals. Many universities have richer entitlements. Should YUFA negotiate improvements to sabbatical pay?

- Yes, it's a high priority: 52.7%
- Yes, but it's a relatively low priority: 39.7%
- No, it's not a priority: 7.6%

Many universities also have greater flexibility with respect to sabbatical entitlements. In particular, their faculty members and librarians are entitled to take a 6-month sabbatical after three years of service. Our Collective Agreement does not recognize this option as an entitlement but makes it contingent upon the Employer's approval. Should YUFA negotiate greater flexibility in the timing of sabbaticals?

- Yes, it's a high priority: 41.2%
- Yes, but it's a relatively low priority: 40.6%
- No, it's not a priority: 18.2%

Q. 4.7 Many YUFA members depend upon external grants to support their research and scholarly activities. To what extent do you find assistance in applying for and administering external grants adequate?

- Fully adequate: 16.2%
- Somewhat adequate: 43.1%
- Less than adequate: 19.9%
- Completely inadequate: 11.4%
- Not applicable: 9.4%

Please indicate sources of dissatisfaction and/or suggest improvements.

- 20% provided written comments.

Q. 4.8 To what extent do you find Computing and Network Services (CNS) and related computer supports at York adequate to support your research?

- Fully adequate: 19.8%
- Somewhat adequate: 45.5%
- Less than adequate: 18.6%
- Completely inadequate: 9%
- Not applicable: 7.1%

Please indicate sources of dissatisfaction and/or suggest improvements.

- 25% provided written comments.

Q. 4.9 To what extent do you find the legal or professional services of the Counsel Office or Secretariat adequate to support your research (e.g., dealing with intellectual property or copyright issues)?

- Fully adequate: 6.1%
- Somewhat adequate: 15.9%
- Less than adequate: 3.4%
- Completely inadequate: 4.7%
- Not applicable: 69.8%

Please indicate sources of dissatisfaction and/or suggest improvements.

- 4.5% provided written comments.

Q. 4.10 To what extent do you find the library collections and resources at York adequate to support your research?

- Fully adequate: 18.3%
- Somewhat adequate: 53.6%
- Less than adequate: 18.6%
- Completely inadequate: 6.3%
- Not applicable: 3.2%

Please indicate sources of dissatisfaction and/or suggest improvements.

- 27% provided written comments.

Q. 4.11 To what extent has the downloading of secretarial and other supports impeded your ability to conduct research?

- Significantly: 21.3%
- Somewhat: 45.7%
- Not at all: 33%

Working Conditions:

Q. 5.1 Some universities claim Intellectual Property Rights on the work of faculty members, and others do not. These claims have caused problems, including delays in submitting research for publication, obstacles to sharing research with peers, withholding dissemination as a form of censorship, and even appropriation by the Administration. Should YUFA seek clarification that members retain full ownership of their intellectual property?

- Yes, it's a high priority: 41.6%
- Yes, but it's a relatively low priority: 40.6%
- No, it's not a priority: 17.8%

Q. 5.2 York holds significant personal information on faculty members. Under outsourcing of work, this information can cross international borders and be subject to access by foreign governments. Should the Collective Agreement contain a clause to protect our personal information by holding it inside the country?

- Yes: 68.8%
- No: 6.7%
- No opinion: 24.5%

Q. 5.3 Should the Collective Agreement ensure that, where the law permits, and except in specific instances when prior approval to the contrary has been obtained from both YUFA and the YUFA employee,

- a. your email be destructively erased from all University controlled systems within a specific period unless you request otherwise?
 - i. Yes: 49.7%
 - ii. No: 23.5%
 - iii. No opinion: 26.8%

- b. your email be treated as confidential and be read by the recipient only?
 - i. Yes: 89.9%
 - ii. No: 4.1%
 - iii. No opinion: 6%

- c. your email not be copied in any form by all University controlled agents?
 - i. Yes: 84.7%
 - ii. No: 5.1%
 - iii. No opinion: 10.2%

Q. 5.4 It is possible to retain records of electronic activity (e.g., Web searches). Should YUFA negotiate restrictions on these records that are similar to those described above?

- Yes: 74%
- No: 9.3%
- No opinion: 16.7%

Q. 5.5 In the past six years, has your academic freedom been threatened by actions within York University?

- Yes: 10.9%
- No: 74%
- N/A: 15.1%

Q. 5.6 Is the increase in use of surveillance equipment on campus a concern (e.g., cameras in the classroom and beyond, key cards)?

- Yes: 22.1%
- No: 65.9%
- No opinion: 12%

Q. 5.7 In exercising our academic freedom, we often express potentially controversial opinions in the classroom. Have you experienced harassment by a student as a result?

- Yes: 14.2%
- No: 85.8%

Q. 5.8 York has deferred millions of dollars in required maintenance. Have physical conditions in your on-campus work environment deteriorated to the extent that it affects your:

- health and safety?
 - Yes: 34.1%
 - No: 65.9%
- teaching?
 - Yes: 42.2%
 - No: 57.8%
- research?
 - Yes: 18%
 - No: 82%

- 117 YUFA members provided written comments in response to this question.

Mandatory Retirement:

Q. 6.1 The new legislation allows discretion in benefits for workers over 65. Is it important that YUFA insist on full benefits for all members?

- Yes, it's a high priority: 70.6%
- Yes, but it's a relatively low priority: 20.2%
- No, it's not a priority: 9.2%

Q. 6.2 Although the University of Toronto has already abolished mandatory retirement, and although Osgoode Law School already permits faculty members and librarians to work up to and including age 70, York's Administration has indicated so far that those scheduled to retire on 1 July 2006 will be required to do so. Should YUFA negotiate to exempt 1 July 2006 retirees from mandatory retirement?

- Yes, it's a high priority: 36%
- Yes, but it's a relatively low priority: 34.2%
- No, it's not a priority: 29.8%

Q. 6.3 Before the 1997 strike, incentives for early retirement resulted in the average age of retirement being less than 65. Should YUFA strengthen incentives for early retirement?

- Yes, it's a high priority: 40%
- Yes, but it's a relatively low priority: 36.3%
- No, it's not a priority: 23.7%

Recruitment & Retention:

Q. 7.1 Should YUFA negotiate a significant increase in faculty and librarian complement?

- Yes: 70.8%
- No: 11%
- No opinion: 18.2%

Q. 7.2 In your experience, what are the principal reasons that colleagues have left York, other than retirement (e.g., money, chilly climate, spouses)?

- 187 YUFA members provided written comments in response to this question. Answers included mention of money, workload, spouses, lack of collegiality, lack of research support, poor management, moving to more prestigious universities, housing, and campus location.

Q. 7.3 Recognizing that academic spouses are a significant percentage of the academic population, many universities have adopted spousal hiring policies as a recruitment and retention tool. How strongly would you support YUFA in bargaining a spousal hiring policy?

- Yes, it's a high priority: 22.4%
- Yes, but it's a relatively low priority: 37.7%
- No, it's not a priority: 39.9%

Q. 7.4 Toronto housing costs are well beyond the means of most new YUFA members and are a factor in the decision to come to York. Other universities provide on-campus housing or support for purchase of housing. Should YUFA negotiate similar supports?

- Yes: 56.8%
- No: 21.7%
- No opinion: 21.4%

Q. 7.5 YUFA advises new hires on the terms of their contracts. Should YUFA negotiate a reporting obligation for the Employer concerning start-up funds?

- Yes, it's a high priority: 31.1%
- Yes, but it's a relatively low priority: 38%
- No, it's not a priority: 30.8%

Q. 7.6 Would you support YUFA negotiating the establishment of a Recruitment Office, the mandate of which would be to support new members in settling in Toronto (e.g., finding housing, schools, etc.)?

- Yes, it's a high priority: 16.1%
- Yes, but it's a relatively low priority: 48.1%
- No, it's not a priority: 35.8%

Organizing & Respondent Profiles:

Q. 8.1 Should YUFA negotiate a Collective Agreement of:

- 1 year: 2.8%
- 2 years: 18.9%
- 3 years: 78.2%

Q. 8.2 How would you like to be informed and involved?

- Surveys: 57.1%
- Meetings in units / Faculties: 40.7%
- Membership meetings: 28.5%
- Communiqués regarding progress in negotiations: 80.4%
- Fact sheets about specific issues (e.g., salaries, housing prices): 80.1%
- Bargaining support initiatives: 20.2%
- Other: 6.7%

Q. 8.3 What could YUFA do to make attending membership meetings about negotiations a more attractive option for you?

- Hold meetings at lunch time: 38.7%
- Hold meetings in the late afternoon: 20.3%
- Offer food and beverages: 32.1%
- Offer childcare: 4.4%
- Keep meetings to two hours or less: 77.9%
- Rotate the days on which meetings are held: 60.5%
- Other: 13.8%

Q. 8.4 What is your sex?

- Female: 135
- Male: 152
- Missing: 54

Q. 8.5 What is your age?

- 34 or younger: 7.3%

- 35-39: 11.3%
- 40-44: 12.5%
- 45-49: 11.9%
- 50-54: 17.1%
- 55-59: 16.2%
- 60-64: 20.5%
- 65 or older: 3.1%

Q. 8.6 In what Faculty is your primary appointment?

- Arts: 43.1%
- Atkinson: 18.5%
- Education: 2.8%
- Environmental Studies: 2.8%
- Fine Arts: 7.4%
- Glendon: 7.7%
- Libraries: 3.4%
- Science & Engineering: 10.8%
- Schulich: 3.7%

Q. 8.7 Would you like to self-identify as a member of an equity-seeking group?

- Woman: 52.7%
- Visible minority: 16.3%
- Aboriginal person: 0%
- Person with disability: 14%
- Lesbian, gay bisexual, transgender: 17.1%

Q. 8.8 Do you have external research funding?

- Yes: 43.9%
- No: 52.8%