

Questionnaire suggests bargaining goals for 2003

by Robert MacDermid, Communications Officer

Cost-of-living allowances and parking were issues YUFA members designated as crucially important in the recent bargaining questionnaire. The results have helped the Executive in the preparation for bargaining. The questionnaire's answers also led off a useful discussion of negotiating at the 11 December membership meeting.

The questionnaires were sent to all 1150 YUFA members in early November. The data for the analysis that follows is based on 357 responses. More than 20 questionnaires have been received since and will be added to the data. This response rate is in line with previous surveys.

The questionnaire was not designed to be an “objective” social scientific project. While every attempt was made to ensure data quality, respondent confidentiality and anonymity, the survey was intended as a guide for YUFA’s initial bargaining positions in the upcoming negotiations. Some questions did include leading statements or facts where a large majority of members would not know the details behind a question. Most of questions dealt with issues that we understood were important to YUFA members. The short length of the questionnaire meant that we did not ask some questions that we knew the answers for, such as the need to improve retiree benefits, often mentioned by representatives from the Association of Retired Faculty.

The content of the membership questionnaire was drawn from previous questionnaires, from consultations with the Bargaining Priorities Sub-Committee and the Equity Committee as well as with other interested members of the YUFA Executive. Bob MacDermid and Brett Cemer assembled and designed the questionnaire. The data entry and dataset building was done by Rick Myles and the Institute for Social Research.

Results

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Salary & benefits

C1 Please rank the following factors in order of the importance you think they ought to be given in determining faculty & librarian salaries at York: Rank; Merit; Year of appointment at York; Years of prior professional experience; Dean’s/Principal’s/University Librarian’s discretion; Market factors (discipline, Faculty of primary appointment, supply & demand).

[Results](#)

C2 Are the current procedures for distributing merit funds fair and transparent?

Results

C3 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?

Results

C4 The Professional Expense Reimbursement (PER/PEA) of \$1025 has not been increased since 1991.... Should YUFA try to bargain an increase?

Results

C5 Several bargaining frameworks might be adopted to address YUFA's concerns about members' salaries. Please rank the proposals below by how strongly you support them: Introduce a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA); Raise floors; Use the 'Salary Adjustment' method again to calculate raises; Move toward a salary grid.

Results

C6 Should YUFA try to negotiate a course cancellation compensation amount?

Results

B1 Would you support a proposal to join a Preferred Provider Network for prescription drug benefits that would allow you to go to specific drug stores and use a benefit card?

Results

B2 Should the cost of consulting a registered dietician or another health care professional be added to that list?

Results

B3 Currently, members get full pay for the 17 weeks of a pregnancy or primary caregiver leave. Thereafter, if members go on parental leaves, they go on EI and get 55% of their regular earnings to a maximum of \$413 per week. Many unions have provisions in their contracts requiring the Employer to make up some of the difference between this amount and members' regular earnings. Many provide for such a "top-up" up to 90% or more of regular earnings. How strongly would you support such a proposal?

Results

B4 Would you support a proposal to eliminate deductibles?

Results

B5 How important is it to you that YUFA attempt to negotiate a parking and commuting benefit?

Results

B6 Should YUFA try to negotiate an improved housing benefit plan?

Results

B7 Another solution to sky-high housing costs might be campus housing for faculty. Should YUFA try to negotiate such a benefit?

Results

C7 What percentage of the overall settlement should go into the following areas? Increasing salaries; Addressing salary equity issues for people who have unfairly low salaries; Merit; Marketability; Increasing benefits.

Results

Workload

W1 How strongly would you support YUFA in trying again to bargain a clause about regular work days and hours?

Results

W2 Would you say your workload has increased, decreased or stayed the same in the past five years?

Results

If you answered 'increased', in which areas of work? (does not equal 100% because respondents could choose more than one answer)

- Teaching/Librarians' professional performance: 70%
- Research/creative activity: 30%
- Service: 60%

W3 In your experience, what are the top reasons why colleagues have left York, other than retirement? (top 4 answers listed)

1. Salary & related items
2. Workload & related items
3. Chilly climate & related items
4. Spouse/family obligations

W4 How strongly would you support YUFA in bargaining a spousal hiring policy?

Results

W5 Please check all of the following statements that fit your [working] experience at York.

Results

W6 The higher enrolments of the coming years, for example due to the double cohort and demographic changes, raise a number of concerns for members. Thinking ahead, please check all the things that concern you? Teaching times & hours; Equitable assignment of teaching loads; Weekend classes/exams; Class sizes; Insufficient staff support and services; Insufficient support in the form of equipment and supplies; Other.

Results

Equity

E1 How well, in terms of diversifying our faculty (to include the 4 target groups of women, visible minorities, Aboriginal and faculty with disabilities) do you think our Affirmative Action (AA) programme is working? Women; Visible minorities; Aboriginal people; People with disabilities.

Results

If you answered 'not very well' (3) or 'not at all' (4) to any of the above, how would you describe the problems with our AA programme? Do you have any ideas for solutions?

82 comments

E2 Would you support including lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender faculty & librarians as a target group in our AA programme?

Results

E3 How strongly would you support a proposal for 'job sharing'?

Results

E4 Would you 'job share' or go on 'reduced load' if you could?

Results

E5 A proposed first step towards pension equity would be to extend this entitlement to members whose pensions will fall below \$50 000. How strongly would you support this?

Results

E6 For members with a disability or special needs: 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 seek to negotiate?

10 comments

Organising

O1 Experience with our employer has shown that members' involvement in developing bargaining proposals and members' interest in the progress of negotiations are key to improving our settlements. Which ways to involve and inform you are most appealing to you? Check all the ones that work for you:

- Surveys: 70%
- Meetings in my unit or faculty: 36%
- Meetings of the entire membership: 18%
- Communiqués from the bargaining team about the progress of negotiations: 69%

- Fact sheets about specific issues, e.g., housing prices, health & safety studies: 68%
- Bargaining support initiatives such as letter-campaigns and information leafleting: 16%
- Feedback to a website: 39%
- Other: 4.5%

O2 What could YUFA do to make attending membership meetings about negotiations a more attractive option for you?

- Hold meetings at lunch time: 24%
- Hold meetings in the late afternoon: 13%
- Offer food and beverages: 18%
- Offer childcare: 4%
- Keep meetings to 2 hours or less: 59%
- Rotate the days on which meetings are held: 43%
- Other: 10%

O3 What is your sex?

Female=147

Male=195

Missing=15

O4 What is your age?

- 34 or younger: 6%
- 35-39: 8%
- 40-44: 10%
- 45-49: 13%
- 50-54: 17%
- 55-59: 22%
- 60-64: 20%
- 65 or older: 2%
- Missing: 3%

O5 In what Faculty is your primary appointment?

- Arts: 43%
- Atkinson: 14%
- Education: 4%
- Environmental Studies: 2%
- Fine Arts: 7%
- Glendon: 8%
- Libraries: 4%
- Pure & Applied Science: 12%
- Schulich: 2%
- Missing: 4%

O6 Would you like to self-identify as one of the targeted groups?

- Woman=106
- Visible minority=33 or 9%
- Aboriginal=1 or 0.3%

- Lesbian, gay bisexual, transgender=22 or 6%
- Person with a disability=10 or 3%

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116 comments