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CAS Negotiations, 2010-11: Newsletter

WLUFA
Wilfrid Laurier University
Faculty Association



Which negotiations is the university attending?

progress \prə-ˈgrɛs\ vi (1590)
1 : to move forward : PROCEED
2 : to develop to a higher, better, or more advanced stage

The headline for the article on the University web site about the current CAS negotiations reads, “CAS negotiations progressing with assistance of conciliator.”

Has the definition of “progress” changed in the last few weeks? The last time WLUFA checked the dictionary, the definition remained the same. What, then, for the University, qualifies as “progress”?

WLUFA certainly understands the meaning of the word.

If progress means “to move forward”, in three days of conciliation, WLUFA has moved by clearing the negotiations agenda of all clauses not connected to its two major proposals on access to employment and compensation.

Some of these moves even included the withdrawal of clauses that could have had financial implications for the University.

In three days of conciliation, WLUFA has also significantly narrowed the scope of its proposals involving access to employment and has worked to craft and present multiple amended proposals on

a CAS Continuing Appointment, each of which addressed the University’s (purported) concerns re: quality of instruction by qualified instructors.

In three days of conciliation, WLUFA has come to the bargaining table prepared with proposals, research and statistics.

In other words, WLUFA entered into conciliation prepared to move forward, proceed and develop – to progress.

The University, however, is not interested in progress.

Their answer at the conciliation table is as it has been (repeatedly) through the last eight months – they wish to “maintain the status quo”.

You don’t need to be an English major to figure out that the language of “maintaining” and of “status quo” are completely antithetical to the idea of progress.

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AGM Supports CAS Negotiating Team

The Contract Academic Staff contract expired August 31st, 2010, and the CAS Negotiating Team, along with the Administration, have been at the table since then.

Negotiations have now reached the stage where WLUFAs has sought the assistance of a conciliator. The Team could not participate in the AGM as they were once again trying to resolve the outstanding articles. Their absence from our Meeting was noted by all in attendance.

Members representing both bargaining units discussed at length ways to show support for the

CAS Negotiating Team as they continue to engage the Administration in the protracted negotiations.

As a result a motion was proposed and subsequently passed unanimously. It reads as follows:

Members of WLUFAs express complete support and confidence in the CAS Negotiation Team, and extreme concern at the slow progress toward a negotiated settlement.

What progress?

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The University's only interest in access to employment for CAS involves a serious infringement on the rights of our full-time colleagues.

The University's only proposal on compensation will leave our CAS, once again, well behind their counterparts at the University of Waterloo.

In addition, the administration's position fails to address our ever-increasing class sizes; it provides no increase in pay for our increased work and productivity, nor does it recognize the substantial contribution to the university community made by long-serving and experienced Members.

The University, in fact, has come to the bargaining table prepared with only one thing – a mandate to say “No”.

Progress, indeed.

We have one more day of conciliation on Thursday, April 28.

WLUFAs will come to the table that day prepared, as it has always done, to move these negotiations to a “higher, better and more advanced stage”.

While the WLUFAs team is discouraged by the

lack of progress thus far, the unanimous resolution of support and plans for action passed at the WLUFAs AGM (while the team was in conciliation on Thursday, April 8) have given the bargaining team renewed energy and commitment to press for a satisfactory settlement on April 28.



Questions or comments?

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