

Labour Relations Report
submitted by Melissa Moroz, Labour Relations Officer
November 7, 2011

Annual General Meeting of the Professional Employees Association
University of Victoria

Bargaining 2012

I will not go into great detail here regarding bargaining because many bargaining bulletins have already been submitted to you and are available on the PEA website. I will say it was a pleasure working with the members of the committee. It's never an easy process and there are always difficult, mind-puzzling and political agreements that need to be reached among committee members. Your committee had these lengthy discussions and debates with the utmost respect for diversity of opinion.

I was inspired by the level of support PEA members provided when CUPE was engaged in job action, erecting picket lines around various campus building. Of course, it's not optimal to lose salary as a result of another union's picket line. In my conversations with PEA members in anticipation of CUPE pickets, very few words needed to be exchanged to convey a message of not crossing the picket line. I recall one enthusiastic phone conversation I had with the wife of a PEA member, her husband not able to take the call: "Trust me dear, he won't be crossing any picket lines!" Enough said.

The ratification process is underway and I anticipate that we'll have a new collective agreement as of November 15, 2012. Hopefully, your retroactivity cheques will be just in time for the winter break!

Case Files, Grievances and Arbitrations

UVic remains a relatively busy chapter of the PEA. There are a number of open files in the areas listed below. Please note that this report is rather cryptic in order to protect the anonymity of members.

LTD, Return to Work and Accommodation cases

Mental health, addictions, and injuries as a result of an accident are the most common reasons members are on LTD, in the process of returning to work, or are being accommodated in the workplace. We have about a dozen members with active files. My role is to represent the interests of members by working with them, management and the human resources department to ensure legal obligations with respect to duty to accommodate and the Humans Rights Code are fulfilled.

Discipline

There have been only a few cases of discipline this year. No members have lost their employment as a result of culpable behaviour.

Letters of Expectation

The University continues to use letters of expectation to deal with alleged performance issues. We tried (unsuccessful) to deal with this issue at the bargaining table. (We wanted Letters of Expectation to be removed from members' files similar to the process for letters of discipline.)

Layoffs

There have been five layoffs this year as a result of budget cuts and re-organization. One layoff is currently being challenged.

Letters of Agreement re hours of work

We are currently negotiating a letter of agreement for the Aquatics department for on-call and call-out provisions. Other employee groups (e.g., Systems, Neptune, Venus) were signed off earlier this year.

Sick Leave

We have a member off on medical leave who was denied sick leave benefits.

New members

We welcome all the new PEA members that are employees working for Venus.

Job Evaluation Committee

Although this process takes some time and effort for all those involved and the system may not be perfect from everyone's perspective, I believe that it continues to be a fair and gender-neutral way of determining salary grades for the wide range of professional positions of our members at UVic. I strongly encourage you to fill out a questionnaire if your job has substantively changed since its original rating. For the benefit of new members, the job evaluation process was implemented in 2003 after several years of work by the then LRO, members of the Chapter, HR and an external consultant who worked together to formulate the job factors and levels used in the process.

If you have any questions or concerns about your employment or the union, please contact me. In addition to my office downtown, I have an office at UVic (BEC room 306) where we can meet.