

An Update for the DCFA Annual General Meeting

The DCFA Annual General Meeting will be held April 30, 2026. This Bargaining Bulletin is drawn from the Vice-President Negotiations' report.

The DCFA-Douglas College Collective Agreement expired on March 31, 2025. We are again in a position where we are bargaining more than a year after the expiry of the Collective Agreement. We were one of the first tables to open in our post-secondary sector, back in September 2025. We have met the Employer at the table for seventeen days so far. We will be scheduling additional dates during the summer semester.

The DCFA has been met with strong opposition from the Employer toward our top two non-monetary proposals: one adding Academic Freedom to the local agreement and the other regulating generative artificial intelligence.

In addition, we have numerous monetary proposals to discussion. But there is one key monetary issue that must be resolved before we can settle.

Unions that cover public employees, such as the DCFA, bargain within what we call the “provincial mandate” system. This “provincial mandate” is the mandate the Employer brings to us, and it sets out terms for a general wage increase and any additional funds available for items such as benefits, time release, etc. It is typically based on the monetary terms agreed at a larger public service table, such as BCGEU (covering civil servants, not Douglas College staff—the latter are currently bargaining with the Employer as well). This “provincial mandate” is not the DCFA's mandate, because the DCFA's mandate is set by our members, as it was at the 2025 DCFA AGM. However, the “provincial mandate” often dictates the money available at our table.

Typically, the terms of the provincial mandate are published and publicly available by the time we reach monetary items in bargaining. At the moment I'm writing, the so-called “Balanced Measures Mandate” is not. The Employer has described the Balanced Measures Mandate to us at the table, but the DCFA has raised the concern that other public service unions have settled on terms that are superior to this description.

There are some characteristics that seem to be settled, mainly that the offer is a four year collective agreement, expiring on March 31, 2029, with a 3% general wage increase per year.

There is less clarity when it comes to the additional funds available at the table. We believe that there is more money available than what has been offered at our local table (and at other

post-secondary tables). This belief is shared across the unions who are part of the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators and several others (some I can personally attest to, having talked to their representatives at the CAUT Bargaining and Organizing Forum in March).

The enhanced mandate would offer a significant amount of additional money to fix some longstanding monetary issues where we've struggled to gain traction over the years, which also contribute to improving recruitment, retention, and working conditions. The most obvious is to universalize language about chairs, granting a chair position with a specific minimum time release to all departments across all faculties. There are additional areas of concern, having to do with boosting wages in some scenarios where regular instructors are paid at contract rates for regular work and introducing a hiring "floor" so that no regular instructor is hired at a step that pays less than the contract faculty rate.

In other words, we still have a lot to talk about at the table.

Summary of DCFA bargaining dates:

- September 16: Signed Protocol Agreement
- October 15: Exchange and presentation of proposal packages
- October 22, 23: Housekeeping; substantive non-monetary items
- November 12, 13: Substantive non-monetary items
- November 27, 28: Substantive non-monetary items
- December 3, 4: Substantive non-monetary items
- January 13, 15: Substantive non-monetary items
- January 20: Substantive non-monetary items
- March 4, 6: Substantive non-monetary items
- March 10, 13: Substantive items, non-monetary and monetary

If you are interested in attending as an observer during the summer semester, the DCFA will circulate the dates in an Update once they are set.

Before concluding, I would like to thank my fellow table officers for their efforts, Melanie Young, Shelley Weisser, Jasmine Nicholsfigueiredo, and Jennifer Kirkey, and the two employees of the DCFA, Anne and Dorina. Robin Wylie (Faculty Bargaining Coordinator for FPSE, seconded from the History and Political Science department) and Andrea Wong (FPSE Staff Representative) also deserve recognition for their work.

I would also like to thank the volunteer members of the DCFA Bargaining Team, Darcy Cutler (HSS), Rosilyn Teng (CBA), and Trevor Smith (Library). They have put in many hours beyond the dates listed above while balancing the demands of bargaining with teaching and their other duties.

In solidarity,

Devin Shaw, VP Negotiations