



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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80% SAY YES TO STRIKE

SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY FACULTY UNION VOTES TO STRIKE

HALIFAX - The Saint Mary's University Faculty Union (SMUFU) voted "yes" to a strike with a resounding majority. Negotiations for a new contract between SMUFU and Saint Mary's University began in June 2018. After numerous meetings with the employer, the bargaining came to a sudden halt when the Employer presented the Union with a final offer that was well below the cost of inflation. SMUFU, which currently represents 293 faculty and professional librarians, held a secret ballot strike ending on October 19, with 80% of the total members voting "yes" to a strike.

Fair compensation, workload and health/wellness benefits for retirees are the main unsettled issues. "Our requests for this new contract are totally fair and reasonable", said Michael Zhang, SMUFU's President. "Our demands are similar to the last two Collective Agreements which were settled rapidly and before the contract expiry. The Employer can afford our demands in light of the large \$3.5 million unrestricted surplus it declared in its last financial statement of March 31, 2018". Competitive compensation and reasonable workload is important to maintain the university's ability to attract and retain qualified full-time faculty and librarians, and necessary to ensure excellent post-secondary education for students and their communities.

SMUFU has never been on strike since it was certified as a Union in 1974. Since the strike vote, the Union has filed an Application for Conciliation. The Minister of Advanced Education and Labour has appointed Mr. Peter Lloyd as Conciliation Officer to resolve this impasse.

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See the SMUFU website for bargaining updates: http://smufu.org/?page_id=951