

UCC Report – AGM 2015 OPSEU Local 653

The Union College Committee (UCC) is a sort of “catch-all” committee that deals with various issues that do not fit under the more specific guidelines of committees such as WMG or CESC. This year the change in Administration resulted in a complete change in membership on the management side of the committee. Unfortunately, in the opinion of the union members, management was either unwilling or lacked the authority to follow up and make changes based on discussions at the UCC table. The result was that many issues came back meeting after meeting and little in the way substantive change seemed to get accomplished this year. Here are some of the main issues that were discussed this year at the UCC meetings during the 2014-2015 academic year:

Faculty-Student-Manager relations

The way that student complaints with faculty are dealt with by academic managers are not consistent and in many cases do not respect the faculty as professionals. The union requested an official policy that would oblige managers to defer student complaints and require that students first consult with the professor. Progress has been made, but this policy is still under review.

Student Feedback Surveys

To comply with PQUAPA requirements, the college continues to try and implement student feedback surveys. Despite the union's objections, management has insisted on using the data from these surveys as part of the faculty performance appraisals. The union has argued that the process need to be more transparent and better explained to faculty, but this was not reality. Survey questions were not shared with faculty before hand, and it was not made clear to faculty that these survey's will be used in performance appraisals.

Faculty performance evaluations

The new process for faculty performance appraisals is in place, but many questions remain. We have asked:

- How are faculty selected for evaluation at any given point?
- Will all faculty get selected over a defined period of time?
- When gaps are encountered, what are the next steps?

Management confirmed there will be a cycle where all faculty are evaluated, from probationary to seasoned employees. The College can also initiate the evaluation process if there are performance issues that arise.

Personal Use of Vehicle

The college had a policy in place for automobile expenses that violated the Collective Agreement. This was pointed out at UCC, but had to be grieved in order for them to revise the policy to be in compliance.

Academic Appeals

Inconsistencies were identified in the academic appeals process, and management has put in place a new process which addressed some of these issues. We will continue to monitor the results of the new process as it is put in practice

Role of Coordinator

There have been instances this year of non full-time faculty, and even non-faculty being assigned as program coordinators. The union has argued the role of coordinator is addressed in the collective agreement and is therefore work for bargaining unit members only. This issue has also gone to grievance.

Timetabling

The new timetabling process continues to produce sub-par timetables. The union also raised the issue of the very restrictive process for changing timetables once they are produced.