



Memo

To: NSCAD Students

From: President Dianne Taylor-Gearing

Date: February 12, 2019

Re: Update on Labour Negotiation

Dear NSCAD Students,

I am writing to update you on the status of labour negotiations between NSCAD and the Faculty Union. I understand that you have questions about the process and how it will impact you.

As you know, the conciliation session last week did not result in a labour agreement between NSCAD and the Union. We are scheduled to meet again on February 19th with the conciliator in the hope of averting a labour disruption.

The faculty union will be in a legal strike position on February 22nd. Whether they choose to go on strike on February 22nd or after a further period of negotiation is up to the Union, and is a right under the *Trade Union Act*. Although the negotiations have been very respectful, a number of significant issues are still outstanding.

The Board and university administration believe it is not appropriate to draw students into taking a position regarding the negotiations. These negotiations are extremely complex and, by definition, should be conducted in private between the appointed bargaining teams. However, we do believe it is important for students to have a general overview and understanding of our position.

We are at a critical point in NSCAD's history. Our future success and sustainability is tied to four key pillars, outlined below. We must ensure that we do not do anything that compromises these pillars.

1. Financial Sustainability

- Our two main sources of revenue are government grants and student tuition.
- The provincial government operating grants will only increase by 1% per year.
- Undergraduate tuition cannot go up any higher than 3% per year. Even at this level, tuition does not cover expenses, given our enrollment levels.
- Our budget must be balanced every year due to recent provincial legislation.

- In addition, our expenses are currently growing faster than our revenue.
- We simply cannot afford the proposals put forward by the Union.

2. Recruitment Efforts

- The recruitment environment for new students is very competitive.
- Our enrollment levels are currently at approximately 620 students; 25% below our target of 850 students.
- The key to NSCAD's sustainability is enrollment growth to the 850 target, coupled with fiscal discipline.
- Any actions that adversely affect enrollment will hurt NSCAD.

3. Infrastructure Renewal

- The Fountain Campus is not "fit for purpose" and must be replaced within ten years.
- Accessibility of our campuses is a primary concern as we plan for renewal.
- We cannot afford to assume debt to pay for a new facility. Therefore, we must invest in fundraising support. That is why the Board allocated the \$1.7m one time operating budget surplus for this purpose.
- Infrastructure investment is also essential to attract and retain students.

4. Academic Program Excellence

- Our reputation is built on our academic programs and the academic contributions of faculty.
- We must continue to support and enhance our programs. We must continue to foster and reward the research and creative practise of faculty.
- We also need to ensure maximum contact between full time faculty and students. This enhances our programs, our academic reputation and student success.

We will continue to keep you apprised of any developments that impact you.

Please visit <https://navigator.nscad.ca/labour/> or direct your questions to Labour@nscad.ca so we can be sure to post responses to your concerns.

Sincere regards,



Prof. Dianne Taylor-Gearing, FRSA
President, NSCAD University