



MEMO

TO: STUDENTS AND MEMBERS OF THE NSCAD COMMUNITY

RE: ISSUE CLARIFICATION

To students and members of the NSCAD community:

I am writing to provide you with some information and clarification on a number of issues. The Board of Governors and administration understand how difficult this work stoppage is for members of our community. We sincerely hope that we can reach a timely resolution that is fair to our valued faculty and affordable for NSCAD.

We understand that a university is much more than bricks and mortar. Our faculty and staff give life to the institution and we value their work and contributions tremendously. We have put forward a proposal that enhances the faculty's total compensation package and addresses numerous issues raised by faculty, including teaching workload.

Together, we have worked hard to put NSCAD back on the path to financial sustainability. We are a very small university and growing student enrollment is critical to our success. We have experienced modest enrollment growth – but we must continue to do so to keep up with rising costs, invest in critical infrastructure, and keep tuition fees in check.

Below, you will find some important clarifications to issues being raised in this labour disruption. I encourage you to ask us questions and to stay informed. Please visit our labour website for updates <https://navigator.nscad.ca/labour/>. You may also submit questions directly to Labour@nscad.ca.

Please know that we are all hoping for a timely resolution.

Sincere regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dianne".

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

Issues for Clarification:

We have heard that NSCAD has not meaningfully participated in the collective bargaining process.

This is not accurate. The Union and administration representatives have met on over 20 occasions, and reached agreement on a significant number of issues. All bargaining has been respectful and constructive. There are a small number of issues remaining, which we believe can be resolved with appropriate compromises. The primary remaining issue is the number of classes that the full-time faculty teach. We want to ensure our students continue to have the same level of contact teaching time with our full-time faculty.

We are hearing that NSCAD is not providing faculty with a fair deal.

Full-time faculty

Firstly, our full-time faculty are among the highest paid in art colleges in all of Canada. We have proposals on the table that meet many of the Faculty Union's requests. Our offer provides annual wages increases, additional benefits, and additional support to allow for research and creative practice time.

We have listened to the Union's concerns about concentrated time for their research and creative practice, as well as additional administrative support and offer the following comments:

- We believe contact time between students and full-time faculty is critical for our student experience. The Union's proposal for course releases would decrease the amount of valuable contact time between students and full-time faculty.
- Currently, faculty has an entire semester dedicated to research activity.
- We have made a variety of contract proposals to enhance the ways in which we support the research and creative practice of our faculty by granting additional annual course releases.
- We are committed to attempting to alleviate some of the administrative burdens on faculty and are working to address these concerns.

Regular part-time faculty (RPTs)

At the last day of conciliation, NSCAD offered RPTs a 10% wage increase over a 4-year collective agreement, with a 6% increase in Year 1 and additional increases to health spending and professional development allowances. We believe this proposal would place NSCAD's RPTs among the highest paid in Canadian arts institutions.

The work requirements and opportunities for our RPTs, like any other university, depend upon enrollment in the courses they teach. We can only offer courses if we know we have the students to take these courses. However, we have historically been able to give the

majority of our part-time faculty work in every semester because of the Precedence List and the Right of First Refusal.

We are hearing that NSCAD faculty's total remuneration package is not on par with their colleagues in other Nova Scotia universities.

Our comparators are not other Nova Scotia universities. They are other independent arts colleges, like Alberta University of the Arts, OCAD University and Emily Carr University of Art + Design. We survey our students and they consistently indicate that these are the institutions they would choose to attend if they were not enrolled at NSCAD. These institutions are NSCAD's comparators because they offer similarly structured studio-based pedagogy. They offer similar class sizes and are equipment and materials intensive.

Based on these comparator institutions, our full-time faculty have a lower teaching load than almost all of our comparators and, on balance, receive higher total compensation and benefits at NSCAD.

We are hearing that NSCAD is not respecting statutory leaves of absence, like maternity leave.

This is simply not true.

Under the *Labour Standards Code* of Nova Scotia, pregnant employees are entitled to take a combination of Pregnancy and Parental Leave for up to 77 weeks. Employees on these leaves may apply to the Federal Government for Employment Insurance (EI) Maternity and Parental benefits for part of this period. While employers are not required to "top up" the EI amount, NSCAD is committed to topping up the EI amount for employees on a combination of Pregnancy and Parental Leave for 29 weeks. FUNSCAD and NSCAD recently agreed and signed off on this "top up" in conciliation.

However, during a legal strike, payment of salary and monthly benefits (including "top ups") are suspended because employees have withdrawn their services. This top-up will resume once the strike concludes and any employees on pregnancy and parental leaves will receive their full eligible top-up.