

Mount Allison Faculty Association

Media Release

For Immediate Release

October 23, 2019

Mount Allison Faculty Show Resolve in Strong Straw Strike Vote

(Sackville, NB) - Members of the Mount Allison Faculty Association (MAFA) have voted overwhelmingly in favour of job action in a straw strike vote conducted recently.

Members voted 94% in favour of the motion that they are willing to take job action, including a strike, if necessary, in support of the union. One hundred and sixteen votes were cast. A straw strike vote is not legally binding. It is a way for the union membership to express their views on the possibility of strike action and to show their support for their union.

Matt Litvak, MAFA President, said, “This is a strong show of resolve on the part of our members. They are calling for improvements in our collective agreements to protect the high quality of our academic programs and to ensure fair and equitable working conditions.”

The main issues under negotiation in this round include faculty and librarian complement, workload, equity and human rights, including disability accommodation, and compensation and benefits for full-time and part-time members. Litvak explained that the number of full time tenured and tenure-track faculty and librarians has been declining at Mount Allison over the past 10 years. Retirements, resignations, and leaves are not necessarily replaced, which puts academic programs at risk and increases faculty and librarian workloads.

Part-time faculty are often called upon to fill the gaps in course offerings – often without much notice—under terms and conditions that make it difficult to support their stay in Sackville. Litvak said, “Our members’ concern with safeguarding the academic mission is reflected in the proposals that we have

brought to the bargaining table. We sincerely hope that the Employer will begin to work with us on reaching a settlement to ensure that Mount Allison continues to provide the high quality academic programming on which our students depend.”

Full-time and part-time faculty and librarians have been working without a contract since July 1, 2019. Negotiations began in June; conciliation began in August with a provincially-appointed Conciliation Officer. MAFA represents 148 full time and 48 part time faculty and librarians.