

Comparators are the key to salary negotiations

Negotiating salary is always difficult in collective bargaining for college faculty. Bargaining does not deal with the pay of one person. It addresses a system-wide set of guides that places academic salaries within an appropriate range. This range focuses primarily on a comparison of colleges to Ontario high schools and universities.

The comparative placement of faculty salary between these two groups was first established in 1972 by a board of arbitration, chaired by Justice J.C. Anderson. The 1991 Joint Union-Management Task Force, chaired by Dr. William Marcotte, re-examined and reaffirmed Anderson's assessment. Through extensive research and deliberations, the task force reinforced and added detail to this comparator group relationship.

The Marcotte Task Force defined parameters and indicators for the negotiation of college academic bargaining unit compensation.

Compensation is defined more broadly than simply salary. It includes consideration of initial step placement, qualifications frameworks, and benefits.

The most appropriate benchmark indicator is halfway between the maximums of the two key comparator groups: the highest Ontario high school maximum and the lowest Ontario university full-professor maximum. Negotiators should also be mindful of the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

continued on page 2...

NEGOTIATIONS 2012

COLLEGE FACULTY



Table 1 shows the rate of inflation in Ontario and the increases of college faculty and comparator groups since 2006.

Table 1 - Comparator group compensation changes 2006-2011 [Ministry of Labour]

Ontario Inflation		CAAT-A Salary Increase		University Faculty Increase		OSSTF	
2011	3.1%	2011	2.0%	2011	1.8%	2011	3.0%
2010	2.5%	2010	2.0%	2010	1.5%	2010	3.0%
2009	0.4%	2009	1.75%	2009	3.1%	2009	3.2%
2008	2.3%	2008	4.0%	2008	3.5%	2008	3.3%
2007	1.8%	2007	3.5%	2007	3.1%	2007	3.3%
2006	1.8%	2006	3.0%	2006	4.9%	2006	3.2%

A fair salary, relative to the comparator groups, allows the colleges to attract and retain faculty with the knowledge, skills, and ability to meet the educational needs of college students. Collective agreements must continue to reflect the Marcotte recommendations.

The question of salary should not simply be of personal gain or sacrifice but of maintaining a well-considered compensation package for Ontario college faculty.

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