



# QUFA ALERT!

Queen's University Faculty Association Bargaining Alert

ALERT 4 • 10 DEC. 2018

## Where We Go From Here

Collective Agreement Negotiation  
and Pension Conversion

**By Elizabeth Hanson**  
Co-Chief Negotiator, QUFA  
Bargaining Term

**and Rob Hickey**  
Co-Chief Negotiator, QUFA  
Bargaining Team

Should QUFA get a deal with the University for a renewed contract that also includes appropriate offsets for pension conversion, QUFA Members will be asked to ratify the new agreement and to consent to the merger of the Queen's Pension Plan (QPP) with the new University Pension Plan (UPP). *However, this vote will not be conducted until the new year, likely in early February.*

The ratification of a new agreement and pension ratification are linked because the University will make all the provisions of a new agreement contingent upon consent to the merger. The mechanics of this process are complicated because not all Members of QUFA are members of the QPP, and QUFA is still sorting them out. In the meantime, however, we want to clarify for Members what the next steps are.

At the fall general meeting on Wednesday 12 December 2018, QUFA will present to Members what we were able to achieve at the table should we have a tentative agreement, or where the roadblocks

lie if we are still negotiating. In the new year, should we have a tentative agreement with the University, we will turn attention to educating our Members on the features of the UPP and all the factors that must be considered by Members in a consent vote. QUFA is entitled by law to consent on behalf of its Members, but the QUFA executive has decided that QUFA's vote will be dictated by the membership, so that if two-thirds of voting QPP plan members give consent, QUFA will give consent on behalf of its Members.

A number of our Members have observed that the townhall meetings conducted by the University in the last week of November were a "sell" rather than a neutral effort at education. This observation is correct; the tone of those meetings reflected the fact that the University unequivocally desires to merge the QPP with the UPP because that merger will relieve it of the burden of solvency payments mandated by the government of Ontario.

QUFA's position is more complex. We have entered into the UPP design process over the past four years in partnership with other faculty associations, other unions (most notably the United Steel Workers), and university administrations. We did so because we understood both that the pressures on the University were real (though they were not precisely that the QPP was "unsustainable" in the sense of being underfunded) and that the University had the power to inflict real pain on our Members in their efforts to get out from under the solvency burden.

We participated in the UPP design so that there would be good options for our Members. However, our position has been, and continues to be, that we remain neutral on the issue of conversion until we deem that the University has recognized the cost to our Members and the benefit to the University of conversion through appropriate offsets, and our Members have given us their informed consent.

To that end, QUFA will provide its Members with written information about the UPP in January 2019 and will conduct its own information meetings at that time, with our own legal and actuarial advisors, once bargaining is completed and Members know the offsets and terms of a new contract to which the University will have agreed. In the meantime, you can find more information about the UPP on the University Pension Plan Ontario Web site.<sup>1</sup>

### Note

<sup>1</sup><http://www.universitypension.ca/>

**Elizabeth Hanson can be reached at [hansone@queensu.ca](mailto:hansone@queensu.ca).**

**Rob Hickey can be reached at [hickeyr@queensu.ca](mailto:hickeyr@queensu.ca).**

### QUFA ALERT! Spread the Word!

QUFA invites you to print out and post this *QUFA Alert!* in a visible place in your department or unit. Thank-you!