

# MSVUFA Strike Preparations

Student Impact



# What is happening?

The Mount Saint Vincent University Faculty Association is negotiating a new Collective Agreement with the MSVU Board of Governors. The Collective Agreement is a document agreed to by both the MSVUFA and the MSVU Board of Governors which documents our working conditions, including workload and compensation.

# Who is bargaining?

There are two groups that are currently negotiating:

- The MSVUFA is made up of full-time faculty, librarians, and lab instructors.
- The Board of Governors (BoG) is a group of community members and senior Mount administrators who oversee the financial dealings of the university.

# What are we bargaining for?

The MSVUFA's priorities during this round of bargaining include:

- **Decolonizing the Collective Agreement**
- **Improving supports and resources for academic & professional duties**
- **Transforming the Collective Agreement through Indigenous-informed practices**
- **Advancing flexible and responsive workplace practices for members throughout the various stages of their careers**
- **Integrating feminist perspectives into the Collective Agreement**
- **Addressing systemic disadvantages faced by equity-deserving, under-represented, and under-served members**
- **Strengthening FA complement language to ensure member diverseness, growth, & renewal**
- **Recognizing and valuing a wider range of scholarly, professional, and service activities**
- **Securing a fair and reasonable compensation package**

# Timeline

The MSVUFA and the BoG have been bargaining since September 2023. Due to a lack of meaningful participation from the BoG, the MSVUFA filed for conciliation last semester. Third-party conciliators facilitated three meetings in January to try and help both parties find agreement.

- Both parties are at an impasse after three conciliation meetings, so the conciliators have filed a “no board” report, which means that no agreement was reached, on January 26th.
- The filing of the report starts the clock on a 14-calendar-day “cooling-off” period, which we're currently in.
- Should the two sides not have reached a tentative agreement by the end of the cooling-off period, MSVUFA is in a legal **strike position** and the BoG is legally able to **lock out** members of the MSVUFA. There is a **48-hour notice** requirement for either action.

# What happens during a strike?

All classes and labs taught by members of the MSVUFA will be cancelled. Courses offered by contract faculty will continue, so students may have none, some, or all of their classes cancelled.

During a strike, MSVUFA members will withdraw their labour from the Mount. Labour includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Teaching, supervising, and advising students
- Service to the university
- Research
- Professional duties
- Counselling work

You will see picket lines at the university entrances to campus. These picket lines will not prevent access to the university grounds. Please feel free to stop and chat with MSVUFA members on the picket lines. If you want, you can even join us!

# Coursework and contact with professors

- Your professors will not be responding to emails via MSVU email accounts, Moodle chats, etc.
- Instructors of cancelled classes will not expect you to carry on with course work as normal, and you will not be penalized for not doing class work while classes are cancelled.
- You can keep up with your reading or assignments that have already been given during any time that classes are suspended, though you will not be able to submit work or get feedback from your instructor.
- The MSVUFA will not prohibit MSVUFA members from writing reference letters for any of their students. If you are worried about reaching your references in the event of a strike or a lockout, contact them now to make arrangements for alternate contact information.

# Ending a strike

- The length of the possible strike will be determined by progress at the bargaining table. Typically strikes in the post-secondary sector lasts a week or two. It is unusual (but not unheard of) for strikes to last longer than that.
- Strikes can end or be averted quite suddenly, so it is important to stay connected through the various communications portals that are available. The bargaining teams will continue to bargain throughout a strike and will announce when a tentative agreement has been reached. This doesn't mean the end of the strike: the agreement has to then be taken to the membership for a vote. This vote generally happens quite quickly and once the agreement has been signed by both sides, classes will resume almost immediately.
- To ensure students complete course work and earn credits, there will be an agreement about any changes to the university's schedule at the end of the strike. Individual MSVUFA members may adjust their course requirements and the exam schedule may need to be revised.



## Support the MSVUFA

- Share your support for MSVUFA on Twitter/X. Tag us @MSVUFA and help share our messages.
- Follow the MSVUSU accounts for student-focused information.
- Call or email MSVU President, Dr. Joel Dickinson, at 902-457-6115 or [joel.dickinson@msvu.ca](mailto:joel.dickinson@msvu.ca) and ask that they take every possible step to prevent the strike by negotiating a fair agreement.
- Join the picket line! If a strike occurs, information about picketing and other strike-related events will be posted regularly on the MSVUFA website.