

Despite continued commitment from Academic staff at StFX to achieving a fair and equitable settlement talks break down resulting in strike action

(Antigonish-January 24, 2013) On January 24, after eight months, talks between the StFX Association of University Teachers (AUT) and the StFX University Administration ended with an impasse.

“The Association remains committed to achieving a fair and equitable settlement at the bargaining table,” said Peter McInnis, president of the StFX AUT. “We have concluded, however, following a careful review of the offer on the table that our members are now prepared to undertake strike action in support of the AUT negotiation team.” Strike action will commence on Monday, January 28.

The AUT proposed reasonable salary increases on par with other regional and national settlements for academic staff. The Association was also seeking modest improvements to health benefits, pensions, and the provision of professional development funds, a standard benefit for academic staff across the country. Furthermore, the AUT was asking for modest contract length extensions for employee groups on less than full year contracts. However, the administration’s offer to date is below recent Atlantic university settlements and well below the cost-of-living.

“High quality education for students at StFX is our priority,” said McInnis. “We cannot accept the broad disparities the Administration is trying to impose on us that would compromise the academic mission of this institution by undermining job security for academic staff. We are simply seeking a fair and equitable deal.”

Academic staff are concerned about the impact of a labour disruption on students. The union cannot accept an unfair and inequitable offer that would erode quality learning conditions for students.

The Association represents over 400 members in eight different employee groups engaged in teaching and research at StFX, over one third of whom are vulnerable due to precarious, limited-term contracts and limited benefits.

Details of the AUT position and bargaining updates are available at www.stfxaut.ca; or contact Avon Brophy, 735-3261.