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New provincial funding cuts require serious decisions

ULFA refusing invitations to meet to discuss reasonable salary demands

The University of Lethbridge is increasingly concerned about the impacts of the University of Lethbridge Faculty Association (ULFA) strike on students and the union's refusal to meet at the negotiating table to discuss our fiscal circumstances.

Since 2019/20, our provincial grant has been cut by more than 20%. We have lost \$21M in annual provincial funding.

The University community has made significant contributions and sacrifices to adjust to this funding gap, including:

- 21% tuition increases for students
- 0% raises for non-union workers since 2015
- 85 non-ULFA jobs lost through attrition and layoffs
- 0 new hires for 17 academic vacancies

Meanwhile, the University has ensured faculty members remain well-compensated and their jobs protected throughout this time.

- Over the last decade, our faculty have enjoyed 34% raises through their collective agreement.
 - Median salaries for assistant, associate and full professors range from \$108,000 to \$178,000 per year.
 - Nearly 30% of faculty earn between \$140,000 to \$260,000 per year.

During mediation in January, the University offered ULFA members more: 3.25% raises, in addition to other raises faculty already receive for career progression and merit. As a result, the University and ULFA were within a 1% salary gap.

ULFA responded by pulling out of the mediation process and demanding 12% raises.

Mediation has successfully resolved other post-secondary collective bargaining negotiations.

The University was disappointed when ULFA abandoned the process. The union used mediation as a pretext to strike. It promised members a strike was not a certainty or would be very short. The University cautioned a strike would be lengthy because of its inability to fund raises beyond 3.25%.

ULFA's demands convey a misunderstanding of the institution's financial position and improper regard for students, other employees and the University's long-term sustainability.

Despite contrary claims, ULFA has refused repeated invitations to meet since Feb. 15 to discuss more reasonable salary demands.

We continue to welcome ULFA to meet at the collective bargaining table for serious negotiations in the hopes of ending the ULFA strike and welcoming students back to class.

For more information, please visit the [University of Lethbridge Collective Bargaining website](#).