



Teaching Support Staff Union

SFU Attempts to Break Teaching Support Staff Union Strike

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 17, 2015

Burnaby, BC - On Friday, June 19th, TSSU members will escalate strike action to grade withholding: members will no longer be providing numerical or letter grades to the SFU system. In response, SFU Administration instructed TSSU members to break their strike. TSSU members voted 92% in favour of strike action in March, and this is the second escalation since.

Reagan Belan, Chief Steward for the TSSU, stated “Instead of bargaining meaningfully on our core issues, SFU Administration has directed our members to hand in grades in direct contravention of our legal strike action. We are shocked that an institution of higher learning in British Columbia would take such destructive steps instead of coming to the table to negotiate a fair Collective Agreement.”

Derek Sahota, TSSU Chair, explained: “During this strike action, our members will still be teaching and providing feedback to our students as usual. We’ve chosen to take this action in the hope of limiting the impact on students while pressuring SFU Administration to do the right thing and negotiate in good faith.”

In a letter to SFU Administration dated June 10th, the TSSU made the following bargaining demands with a deadline of June 16th: 1) add a member of Senior Administration to their bargaining committee with the authority to conclude an agreement; 2) add another faculty member to their committee who has taught in the past three years; 3) schedule back-to-back bargaining dates that do not end at 4pm; and 4) withdraw SFU Administration's concessionary proposals for Instructors in ELC/ITP. When the deadline passed, the TSSU notified SFU Administration that bargaining on June 17th was cancelled.

Sahota continued, “After 14 months at the table, our members are disappointed that SFU Administration still refuses to take bargaining seriously. When SFU sent a Senior Administrator to the table in 2012, we signed a contract within 48 hours.”

George Temple, spokesperson for the TSSU added, “We have stated our core issues at the bargaining table clearly and repeatedly. Many of them come at no monetary cost to SFU, including seniority rights for experienced sessional instructors.”

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Temple concluded, "Our other core issues are protection from overwork/underpay and access to work for TA/TMs, providing SFU's standard benefits package to Continuing Language Instructors, and guaranteeing the basic protections of BC law for Health and Safety training and Payment of Wages."

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