

Bargaining Update

**GROUP 1
RATIFICATION
GROUP 2
CONCILIATION**

In Memoriam

**DR. JON THOMPSON
ROBERT GAGNÉ**

Contract Academics

**MESSAGE FROM
THE VP**



**NOTES FROM YOUR
GRIEVANCE TEAM**

AUNBT Newsletter

Message from the President

VIQAR HUSAIN | MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS, UNBF

As we approach the conclusion of an unusually long collective bargaining season, we owe a profound debt of gratitude to our Lead Negotiator, Sue Blair, and team members Jake van der Laan, Sarah Rigley MacDonald, Alyssa Sankey, Merle Steeves, and David Speed. Throughout the summer and fall, they devoted themselves to the negotiating table with only brief respites. Their dedication cannot be overstated. Their work is still not complete due to a reasonable stance of principle in the negotiations for Group 2, one that hopefully will be resolved soon.

We also thank John Ball and David Creelman for co-chairing the Bargaining Committee and Adam Wilson and Leslie Jeffrey as co-chairs of the Collective Bargaining Council. Thanks also to the members of the Bargaining Committee and of the Bargaining Council for their diligent work in guiding negotiations and keeping the membership informed.



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In Senate news, in the September meeting, five senators asked the administration about the changes in faculty complement, courses taught by CAEs, term appointments, staff costs of the non-academic institutes (McKenna Institute, Pond-Deshpande Center, Wallace-McCain Institute, and the newly launched Institute for Population Health), and expenses associated with consultants, from 2019 to 2024. The responses were illuminating: in this period the number of courses taught by CAEs more than doubled across the university, and term-appointments increased five-fold in SASE (SJ). The tenure-track faculty data appears in the table below. Significant highlights include the loss of five faculty in Science (F), increases of six each in SASE (SJ) and Computer Science (F), and seven each in Arts (F) and Engineering (F).

	Appointments							Retirements/Resignations		NET
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	TOTAL	TOTAL		
Arts-SJ	2	2	1	6	1	3	15	11		4
Business•SJ	1	1	1	1	3	1	8	8		0
SASE-SJ	2	0	8	4	4	2	20	14		6
Libraries•SJ	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0		1
Arts•F	4	4	3	7	8	2	28	21		7
Computer Science•F	3	0	4	1	2	1	12	6		6
Education•F	3	1	2	3	3	2	14	11		3
Kinesiology•F	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1		0
Engineering•F	2	3	5	8	4	5	27	20		7
FOREM-F	0	2	0	2	0	0	4	4		0
Law-F	1	1	1	1	3	2	9	4		5
Management•F	2	0	3	2	2	1	10	8		2
Nursing•F	1	2	3	5	3	2	16	15		1
Science•F	2	1	2	2	1	3	11	16		-5
Leadership Studies•F	1	0	2	0	0	0	3	2		1
Libraries•F	0	1	0	3	1	0	5	5		0
							184	146		38

Senate was also informed that the staff costs for the non-academic external facing institutes coming from UNB's operating account—the one that must be balanced every year—is about \$1million, and that this amount is not subject to the cuts faced by academic faculties. The question about expenditure on consultants from 2019 to 2024 remains unanswered.

In late November I attended the Fall CAUT Council. CAUT Executive Director David Robinson described the four A's adversely affecting universities: austerity, authoritarianism (declining collegiality), AI and Ed Tech, and Anti-Equity steps by some provinces. Two member resolutions passed unanimously: Support for action against Quebec's Bill 3 and condemnation of the Alberta Government's use of the Notwithstanding Clause to force teachers back to work during a lawful strike. A third member resolution calling for CAUT to fully stand "behind all academic staff associations that resolve not to endorse particular positions on divisive issues" (read Gaza) failed after more than two hours of debate.

The newly formed AUNBT Engagement Committee held its inaugural meeting earlier this year. Its mandate is to foster solidarity and communication through educational and social events, including the Jon Thompson Lecture on Academic Freedom. We welcome your ideas for future events at aunbt@aunbt.ca.

Lastly, please consider standing for election to the AUNBT Executive Committee or other officer positions—and putting your names forward to join the Senate or the Board of Governors. There are six faculty seats on the BoG (four from Fredericton, two from Saint John). Openings for the three-year terms are announced by the university secretary when they arise. These roles are vital; without an active faculty presence, the Board’s understanding of the university is shaped entirely by the administration, a consummation devoutly not to be wished. Please contact me for more information if you are interested.

Collective Bargaining Update: Group 1 and Group 2

SUE BLAIR | LEAD NEGOTIATOR

FULL TIME UNIT (GROUP 1)

We are pleased to report that the Full Time Unit (Group 1) ratified the tentative agreement between UNB administration and AUNBT which was reached on Friday, February 6. Voting was held over two days (February 9 and 10) and members voted in support of the agreement. It is anticipated that the tentative agreement will go before the UNB Board of Governors for a ratification vote in the coming weeks. If the agreement is ratified by the UNB Board of Governors, it will need to be signed by both parties before it is implemented.

There were a number of gains achieved for AUNBT members in the new agreement, including an economic adjustment that increases all salaries by twelve percent over four years, strengthening of collegial processes, and a process empowering academic units to determine whether a course may be designated as an assignable online course. AUNBT was also able to push back proposals from administration which would have allowed teaching to be assigned in any two of three terms (including summer) to Professors and would have required Teaching Professors to teach in all three terms.

In addition to this, there were a number of changes negotiated to the assessment

provisions of the Collective Agreement. Provided the agreement is ratified by UNB and signed by both parties, AUNBT will send out a summary of these changes to the membership. We will also hold an information session in the spring to provide an overview of changes to the assessment provisions so that members have a thorough understanding of the changes. In the meantime, if you are anticipating going up for assessment and have questions, please feel free to contact the AUNBT office at aunbt@aunbt.ca.

AUNBT would like to recognize members of the Bargaining Team and the Collective Bargaining Council who have been providing feedback on the negotiations since June and all faculty members who have provided input on the bargaining process. AUNBT could not have achieved this agreement without your input and support!



“Snowflake [cropped]” by Dave Pijuan-Nomura, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

CONTRACT ACADEMIC EMPLOYEE UNIT (GROUP 2)

The AUNBT bargaining team has been in negotiations with UNB administration since June for the Contract Academic Employee (Group 2) Agreement. To this point the parties have been unable to reach a tentative agreement. AUNBT has requested that the provincial government appoint a conciliation officer to assist the parties in reaching an agreement and the Minister of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour has granted AUNBT's request. The parties anticipate that meetings with the conciliator will be scheduled soon.

While AUNBT always hopes that the parties we will be able to reach an agreement without the appointment of a third-party conciliator, it is a normal part of the bargaining process and the fact that AUNBT and UNB are participating in the conciliation process should not be cause for alarm.

AUNBT will be holding a meeting in the coming weeks for members who are interested in learning more about the status of bargaining for Group 2. A notice of such a meeting will be sent to all members of Group 2 once it is scheduled.

Message from the Vice President for Contract Academics

JEFF MCNALLY | COMPUTER SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS, UNBSJ

Welcome to 2026.

As everyone is aware, AUNBT has been in the midst of negotiations for both Full-Time Members (Group 1) and Contract Academics (Group 2). We are not alone in this: many universities are currently negotiating working rights and responsibilities as well, and not all of those negotiations are proceeding as smoothly as ours. Several other unions have been brought to the brink—or even beyond the brink—of strike action, making it imperative that we remain aware of who is affected, why, and where.



“Snowflakes [cropped]” by James Mann, [CC BY 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/)

In addition to my role as Vice-President CAE, I also serve as one of the two Defence Fund representatives for AUNBT. We have seen a great deal of activity over the past semester. Serving on the Defence Fund is a constant reminder to me that AUNBT is a union and that unity is fundamental to our strength.

Coming Events

Annual General Meeting

When: Wednesday, April 22 at 10 am

Where: Marshall D'Avray 143 (Fredericton), Hazen Hall 225 (Saint John) and Zoom

AUNBT Offices are Moving

When: Soon

Where: from IUC to Neville Homestead

As Vice-President CAE, I want to remind members that unity means recognizing that Full-Time Members and Contract Academics belong to the same union. I believe it is more important than ever that we not work against one another, as doing so almost always harms us all in the long run. At UNB, we are seeing less full-time hiring, which naturally leads to an increased number of courses being offered on stipend. At the same time, these stipends increasingly come with rising enrolment caps, expanded office-hour expectations, growing volumes of student email, and heavier marking loads. In addition, recent advances in AI require us to address modern technologies in ways that often demand significantly more time and effort if we are to maintain educational integrity. Unfortunately, these increased demands are frequently met with only modest increases in compensation or support, often falling behind even cost-of-living increases.

For many Contract Academics, teaching stipends represent a primary source of income rather than a supplement. Decisions to reduce summer offerings or assign courses to full-time faculty as overload have a direct financial impact on those who rely on this work. Furthermore, when new full-time positions become available, the experience and dedication of long-serving contract members should be viewed as an asset. True unity within our union requires an equitable approach to hiring and a commitment to protecting the professional stability of all

members.

I usually like to bring in an Article of the Collective Agreement to discuss here, but as we are negotiating, I will leave that till next time. Have a great term.

In Memoriam

DR. JON H. THOMPSON

VLAD TASIĆ | MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS, UNBF

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Dr. Jon H. Thompson, Professor Emeritus and former President of AUNBT. Jon passed away peacefully on December 29, 2025, at the Dr. Everett Chalmers Hospital in Fredericton.

Jon made outstanding contributions to AUNBT. He was instrumental in faculty efforts to unionize and secure our first collective agreement with the University. He served as President of AUNBT (1980-82) and in several other roles, including grievance officer. Beyond any formal position, Jon provided invaluable counsel to the Association and to individual faculty and staff throughout his career and into retirement. He was closely involved



in key moments of AUNBT's history over more than forty years: from our first collective agreement, through the New Brunswick PSE Crisis of 2007-8, to AUNBT's UNB Act Task Force, established in response to the University's attempt to change the UNB Act in 2013-14 without consultation.

A strong advocate of collegial governance and a formidable critic of managerialism, Jon was also a firm believer in diplomacy and dialogue. In 2016 he was among the faculty members who gave keynote presentations at the Board of Governors Summer Retreat, addressing academic planning, priorities, and the development of bicameral governance at Canadian universities and at UNB. His notes for that presentation, Shared Governance and Planning: A History, remain essential reading for anyone interested in university governance.

Jon's work with the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) earned him recognition as one of Canada's foremost defenders of academic freedom and due process. From 1985 to 1988, he chaired CAUT's Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee. In 1993, CAUT presented him with its James B. Milner Memorial Award, in recognition of his distinguished contributions to academic freedom.

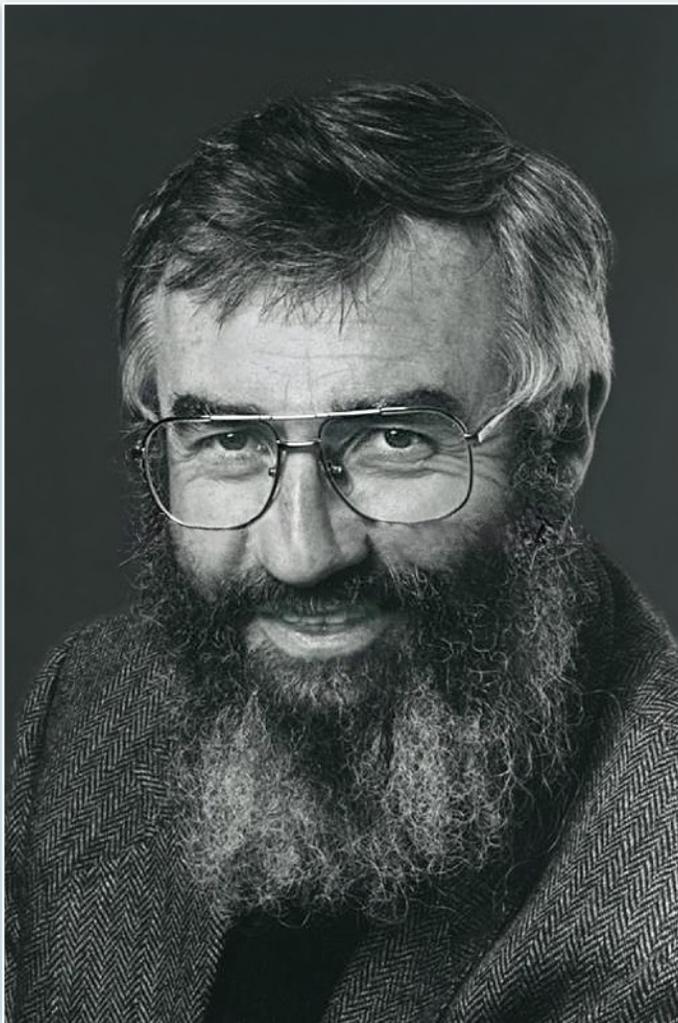


Photo credit: Joy Cumming

Nationally, Jon is best known for his work on two landmark reports commissioned by CAUT, both of which demonstrated his extraordinary courage and integrity. From 1999 to 2001, he chaired the independent commission investigating efforts by the Hospital for Sick Children and Apotex Inc. to prevent University of Toronto professor Dr. Nancy Olivieri from reporting an unexpected medical risk to patients. He and committee members, Patricia Baird and Jocelyn Downie, published the Olivieri Report in 2001. In 2009, CAUT appointed Jon to examine concerns that academic freedom was being threatened at York University conference on models of statehood for Israel and Palestine. His findings were published in the 2011 book No Debate: The Israel Lobby and Free Speech at Canadian Universities.

From 2004 to 2013, Jon also served on the Board of the Harry Crowe Foundation, a charitable organization dedicated to education and research on post-secondary teaching in contemporary society, freedom of academic expression, institutional autonomy, and the independence of research and scholarship.

In honour of his many contributions, AUNBT inaugurated the Jon Thompson Lecture Series

on Academic Freedom in 2012. The series invites speakers to deliver lectures on academic freedom at both UNB Saint John and UNB Fredericton.

Jon helped shape AUNBT. Our organization owes so much to his sound counsel and mentorship, his knowledge of history of university governance, and his superb diplomatic skills. He will be deeply missed.

ROBERT GAGNÉ

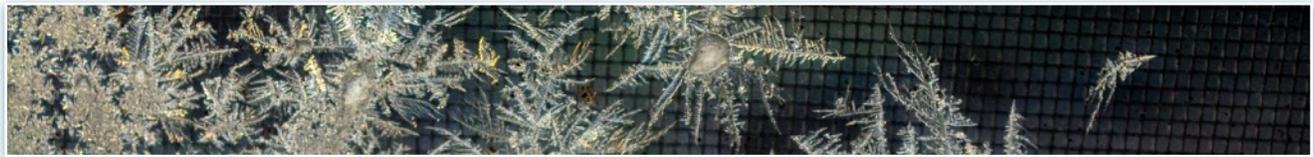
MICHAEL KELIHER

It is with sadness that we share the passing of our former colleague Robert Gagné, who died on January 28, 2026.

Robert served AUNBT as a Professional Officer from 2014 to 2022. During those years, he made a meaningful impact on many of us through his knowledge, his sense of humour, and his generous spirit. Those who worked with him remember him as a kind and joyful presence in our office.

Robert's contributions to the Association and its members were deeply valued, and he will be missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him. We invite you to read his full obituary [here](#).

Our thoughts are with his family, friends, and colleagues, and all who were touched by his life.



"Ice Crystals on Our Windows [cropped]" by James Mann, [CC BY 2.0](#)

Notes from your Grievance Team

LUCIA DEMAILO | MICHAEL KELIHER

ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE PROCESSES

Assessments are in full swing at UNB. If you are a faculty member undergoing assessment who has questions about the assessment process or if you are sitting on an assessment committee and have questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to for guidance and support.

WORKLOAD ASSIGNMENT

As per Article 19 of the Collective Agreement, faculty members are to be provided with their workload assignments from their Deans not later than June 1. Please remember that workload in the summer months can only be assigned with the consent of the faculty member.

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions or concerns regarding these or any other workplace issues, please feel free to contact Lucia DeMaio or Michael Keliher, AUNBT's Labour Relations Lawyers, at lucia.demaio@aunbt.ca or michael.keliher@aunbt.ca. Inquiries can also be sent to your grievance officers — Vlad Tasić on the full-time side and Kendra Haines for CAEs — and to the AUNBT general office at aunbt@aunbt.ca.