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News Release
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Employer walks away from talks with Faculty and Librarians at St. Michael's in the University of Toronto

TORONTO - The Administration of the University of St. Michael's College (USMC) has walked away from negotiations with its faculty and librarians after almost nine months of bargaining over a first collective agreement.

USMC faculty and librarians are members of the University of Toronto Faculty Association (UTFA), and constitute a certified bargaining unit within the ambit of the Ontario Labour Relations Act. The two sides have been attempting to reach a settlement in advance of being in a legal strike/lockout position on October 8.

The UTFA-USMC bargaining team tabled a comprehensive response to management's last position on September 24, making several concessions to employer demands. Within minutes, USMC management rejected all of the concessions made by the faculty and librarians without substantively addressing any one of them, and simply walked away from the table.

“This dispute is not about money” emphasized Michael Attridge, Chair of the UTFA-USMC unit and member of the bargaining team. “It’s about academic freedom and protecting the rights of faculty and librarians against arbitrary management power.”

UTFA President Scott Prudham commented “The USMC Collegium’s proposal on financial exigency, program redundancy and curtailment of library services is the worst language in the University sector in Canada for several reasons. For example, one provision would leave the process and criteria for identifying individuals to be declared redundant in the event of program redundancy to the sole prerogative of the Dean. That is simply an affront to what we mean when we say ‘university’ and it casts USMC in a very poor light indeed. ”

“We remain willing to resume bargaining at any time – day or night.”

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