

The negotiations are underway!

Takeaway

The ASPPC unanimously rejected the employer offer tabled on December 16th, 2022

Next steps

Participate in your union's general assembly and the bargaining consultations!

Read

« L'offre de formation à distance au collégial : état des lieux et enjeux socioéconomiques » published by the « Institut de recherche en économie contemporaine (IREC) ».

On December 15th last year, the Treasury Board submitted its intersectoral offers (salaries, pensions, parental rights and regional disparities) to the Common Front. The next day, it was the Comité patronal de négociation des collèges' turn to respond to the college professors' sectoral demands.

During a joint meeting online, delegates from the unions of the l'Alliance des syndicats des professeures et professeurs de cégep (ASPPC) were quick to note the obvious gap between the government's claim – that it wants to valorize public and parapublic sector employees – and the actual content of the employer offer submitted to the Cégep professors' sectoral table. The latter presents a dangerously narrow vision of college education, mainly because it advocates for the use of programs to meet the needs of the labour market instead of striving to provide adequate support for student success.

Moreover, the employer offer contains several contradictions and equivocations. For example, according to the Comité patronal de négociation des collèges (CPNC), valuing staff should be a guiding principle in bargaining, but the solutions they propose mention a reduction in access to leave and disability insurance. It is thus clear that when the employer refers to valorization, it is in the management sense of the term: “valuing” staff means getting more work out of us!

Teaching in the time of external constraints

From a pedagogical perspective, the view of college education in the CPNC's offer contains other disturbing elements. While we were happy to see that both sides share observations on the diversity of students' needs, we were saddened by the fact that the only solution put forward is distance learning (DL). It is important to note that DL is also mentioned as a solution for the lack of facilities and resources in the college network. By promoting DL as the remedy for all sorts of problems, management seems to be ignoring the experience of the pandemic and the state of research on DL. Studies show that the different distance learning approaches are only suited to very specific groups of students and pose serious problems for others in relation to both mental health and student success.

Major gaps

Given the short-sightedness of the CPNC's offer, the glaring absence of several issues raised by the unions comes as no surprise. For instance, the teaching load is nowhere to be found in the offer. There is no mention of job insecurity either, which is but one of several major omissions. It will therefore be up to us to put these fundamental matters back on the agenda of the negotiations.



We can, of course, expect to make progress with management during bargaining. Their recognition of the difficulties in recruiting and retaining professors and their interest in discussing several important subjects such as research, the recognition of prior learning and acquired competences (RAC) and distance learning will hopefully serve as the basis for substantial talks at the table.

The union response: we're here, on the right side!

For the talks to be successful, our unions' members will have an important role to play over the coming weeks. Participation in general assemblies in the winter semester will be essential for responding to the employer's offer: it helps us adopt a stance and detail our own demands. We can all show support for our union demands by attending assemblies and partaking in collective actions outlined in the ASPPC and the Common Front's plans.

The active participation of professors, especially in the workplace, is crucial to the credibility that the Alliance's Negotiating Committee has in the eyes of the CPNC. We must not forget that even if the talks sometimes seem far from our daily lives, management is attentive to our determination to obtain an agreement that satisfies our legitimate needs in the workplace!

To find out more

The ASPPC Negotiating Committee has several information tools for you:

- L'info-négo: A publication printed occasionally to highlight the main stages of the negotiations.
- Flash négo: posted regularly on social media, the “flash négo” posts will keep you informed of upcoming events.
- Your local union will also receive a report from the bargaining table after every

Stay tuned!

