

# BLOC-NOTES



for cegep teachers



## **SALARY RELATIVITY AND MASTER'S-DOCTORAL ECHELONS TOWARDS REAL RECOGNITION OF THE FACT THAT WE ARE PART OF HIGHER EDUCATION!**

**A**t a meeting on February 11 of the evaluation committee<sup>1</sup> for the job classes involved in salary relativity work, the *Conseil du trésor* (Treasury Board) officially filed an evaluation that puts CEGEP teachers in ranking 22, which corresponds to our current remuneration. But this evaluation is still unsatisfactory, since it doesn't really recognize that we are part of higher education. The *Conseil du trésor* had classified us in ranking 21 back in June 2013, and it took exceptional mobilization by teachers for the *Conseil du trésor* to reassess its position.

The salary relativity work is done by the inter-union coalition, on the one hand, and the *Conseil du trésor* on the other. In a letter of agreement signed in 2011, the union organizations and the *Conseil du trésor* agreed to determine the value of the gender-neutral (mixed) job classes. About thirty gender-neutral job classes are currently being evaluated, including CEGEP teachers. After the evaluation, we will also have to come to an agreement, if applicable, on the amounts of pay adjustments and the dates for paying them. Since there was no calendar in the letter of agreement, the inter-union coalition proposed that

the evaluation of job classes be finalized by December 2013, with the results seen. However, we are still working with to the goal of concluding the work on relativity before the next round of bargaining, despite the imminence of an election campaign that is likely to cause new delays.

### **The salary relativity process The investigation**

To carry out salary relativity work, the inter-union coalition and the *Conseil du trésor* agreed to use the job evaluation system<sup>2</sup> that was used for the pay equity work. This system uses 17 subfactors like autonomy, reasoning, physical effort, psychological conditions, etc. To ensure a common understanding of jobs, each job class in the public and parapublic sector was surveyed, using a questionnaire based on the 17 sub-factors. CEGEP teachers were surveyed in 2001, at the same time as other job classes. For CEGEP teachers, the parties also took into account *Teaching at the College Level... Profile of the Profession*, a joint study agreed upon in 2008, and the collective agreement.

1 The evaluation committee is composed of the inter-union coalition (CSN, CSQ, FTQ, FIQ and APTS) and the *Conseil du trésor*.

2 For details of the evaluation system, readers are invited to consult "*Le système d'évaluation des emplois*," a document available from their unions.

## **The evaluation committee**

The inter-union coalition and the *Conseil du trésor* each did separate evaluations of the gender-neutral job classes before simultaneously exchanging the detailed results of their evaluations about a week before they were discussed by the evaluation committee. Only the sub-factors on which the *Conseil du trésor* and the inter-union coalition disagreed were discussed at the evaluation committee's meetings, which took place, for the first time for all the gender-neutral job classes, back in the spring and fall of 2013. For the first meeting on CEGEP teachers, held on June 19, FNEEQ acted as spokesperson for the inter-union coalition. There were 9 sub-factors in dispute at the time. Very few job classes got identical rankings from the *Conseil du trésor* and the inter-union coalition. In the case of CEGEP teachers, the gap was substantial, since as we indicated above, the *Conseil du trésor's* evaluation ranked us at 21 whereas FNEEQ's, accepted by the inter-union coalition, put us at 25.

There have been other meetings of the evaluation committee since, and a third round is planned. The goals are to ensure that the various aspects retained for the job evaluations are shared and to narrow the gap between the evaluations of the two parties.

## **The sub-factors in dispute**

For CEGEP teachers, there were still 4 sub-factors in dispute at the end of the February 11 discussion: autonomy, reasoning, the training-experience combination, and psychological conditions. Three of these four sub-factors – autonomy, reasoning and training-experience – are key to our assertion that we are part of higher education. Although the *Conseil du trésor's* evaluation has now incorporated various aspects of our task that were missing in its first evaluation (program committees, departmental responsibilities, departmental committees, the complexity of the concepts taught), it still doesn't recognize their true value. It also still has to improve its understanding of the role of department co-ordinators, since it equates them with hierarchical supervisors. Moreover, this also speaks to the importance of autonomy in the practice of our profession.

We think that if the *Conseil du trésor* genuinely recognizes that we are part of higher education, this must necessarily be reflected in our final ranking and give us a ranking higher than 22. To achieve this, we know that we can count on the mobilization of FNEEQ's CEGEP teachers.

## **What about the master's-doctoral echelons in all that?**

In a statement to the daily *Le Soleil* on January 14, 2014, about salary relativity for CEGEP teachers, *Conseil du trésor* chair Stéphane Bédard said: "At this time, we are ready to recognize the classification they have, the benefits they have at the master's and doctoral level, and even look at adjusting them." For our part, we think there is no avoiding the fact that the master's-doctoral echelons must be preserved, since this is another important aspect of recognizing that our profession is part of higher education. Furthermore, these echelons absolutely have to be adjusted, because the spread between them and echelon 17 has dwindled dangerously since 2002. The gap could get even narrower if the adjustments made to pay for the first 17 echelons don't entail improvements for echelons 18, 19 and 20.

The salary relativity work will have an impact up to the echelon corresponding to the degree recognized by both parties as the one that enables CEGEP teachers to acquire the knowledge needed to perform the duties of the job. At the present time, the FNEEQ's position is that this is a master's degree, whereas the *Conseil du trésor* opts for a three-year bachelor's degree. If the *Conseil du trésor's* position were to be accepted, the adjustments in pay corresponding to the ranking obtained would only apply to the first 17 echelons.

To preserve and improve the master's-doctoral echelons, it is important to discuss the salary structure for CEGEP teachers with the *Conseil du trésor* at another table while the work on salary relativity continues.

In sum, FNEEQ will continue to argue that CEGEP teachers are part of higher education and the push to have this reality truly reflected in the evaluation of our job class!

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