

Final offer vote for academic employees

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Dear Professors, Counsellors and Librarians,

I hope this finds you well.

I'm writing on the eve of the vote on the employer's **final offer** to encourage you to cast your ballot.

We have been through a lot together over the past nearly two years. As I have said many times, you responded – and continue to respond – magnificently and your support of our students has been unflagging. Through waves of infections, virus variants and vaccination campaigns, thanks to the extraordinary commitment of you and your colleagues, Seneca has been a leader in navigating through the pandemic.

But now, the outcome of this vote will determine not just how the rest of this term goes, but the next three years as well. It will determine how we as an institution – and most importantly our students – emerge on the other side of the pandemic.

The communications you have been receiving from the CEC have stressed that this final offer will bring certainty in uncertain times. Not just certainty, but also a fair and decent contract.

Undoubtedly, you are hearing otherwise from your union leaders. But before you cast your ballot, I would ask you to read the offer to determine for yourself what is, and isn't, at stake.

The final offer provides a number of improvements to your working conditions and addresses the key demands that your union has brought to the bargaining table. Neither side got everything it wanted when negotiations started last summer – that is the nature of compromise between two parties.

But the CEC's final offer does not – and I underline this point – does not ask for any concessions. It also provides the maximum compensation increase we are allowed to offer under provincial law.

In the early years of my career, I was a member of unions. I was even a steward. I know this is not how bargaining should end.

But accepting this final offer means we aren't handing over your collective agreement to the legislature, or an arbitrator, to determine. Instead, it brings to a balanced and reasonable conclusion eight months of negotiations between our respective teams.

And it brings certainty for three years as we – and the rest of the world – right ourselves after the pandemic.

For you, your students and Seneca, please vote yes.

Sincerely,

David Agnew
President

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