

Faculty Survey Results

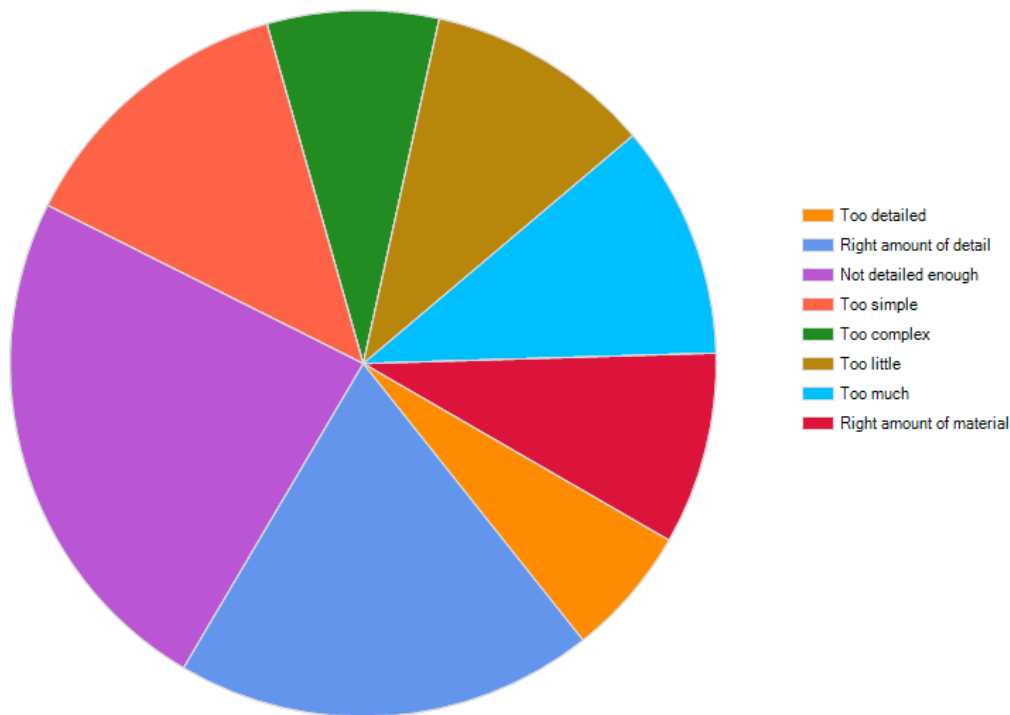
The faculty union undertook an on-line faculty survey in March 2010 to collect more information about faculty's concerns regarding the recent negotiations and contract votes. We were looking for information both in terms of why faculty voted the way they did and how the faculty union executive met or didn't meet the needs of faculty. We will use the data collected to better address faculty needs in the future. We recognize that there were some flaws in the survey design which may impact the accuracy of the data and we apologize for that. However, we feel that the data is helpful none the less and can guide us in future.

The good response rate - almost 300 in total, reflects approximately a 38% response rate for F/T faculty and approximately 12% for P/L faculty.

Implications: Faculty clearly want to have their say and clearly we need to give more opportunities to make this happen.

We wanted to know what faculty thought about the information sent to them by the UNION side.* So we asked:

What did you think about the information sent to you from the UNION side during the negotiations and the two votes?



In terms of the amount of detail that we provided, responses suggested:

Right amount of detail - 23%

Not detailed enough - 30%

Too simple - 16%

Many comments suggested that much of the union material was biased and did not present the facts.

Implications:

We will try to organize future informational materials so that we give an overview, followed by additional detailed, more complex information for those who want it.

In terms of bias, perhaps we can structure our materials so that we first address the facts as clearly as possible, then identify our position with our recommendations.

* this question was adapted after the first few hours of responses to allow for the option of "right amount of material"

Next, we wanted to know how well informed faculty felt regarding the issues. This is what we were told:

Responses:

The responses clearly indicated that on issues related to salary increases, most respondents felt well informed. However, many faculty (40% of respondents) needed more, clearer, less biased information on the other issues, i.e. modified workload arrangements, academic freedom, collegiality, and partial load issues.

Implications?

While about 60% of respondents felt adequately or very informed on most of the issues, we obviously need to work on improving the information we send out. As noted under question #1, we can work on being upfront about our biases and trying to state the “facts” more clearly. We also need to watch that our messages do not seem to be contradictory. For example, when identifying the main issue of the negotiations our materials sometimes suggested “student evaluation factors”, sometimes “collegiality”. Actually, these two issues were interwoven- but we didn’t get that message across clearly enough.

Next we looked at how the union (the local and the negotiating team) gets information to its members. Recently we had started to utilize email more than print materials placed in mailboxes. We wondered how this worked. Would other options work better?

Responses:

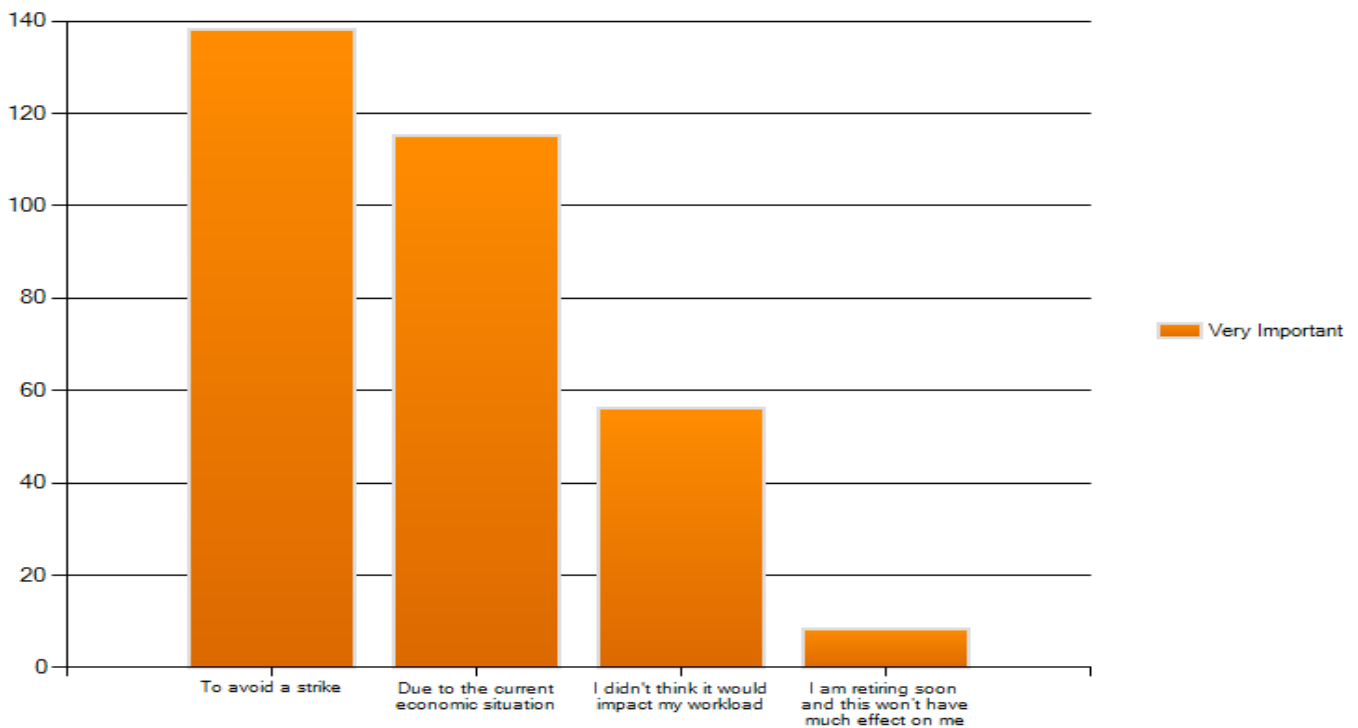
89% of the respondents identified email as the preferred delivery method. However, this question had an innate bias – the survey itself was on email. We did get some good suggestions for alternative deliveries.

Implications?

While we will continue to use email as a quick and efficient method of delivering materials, we also need to organize more small group and face to face discussion opportunities, perhaps on a school by school basis. Based on the survey, continued use of some printed materials is clearly warranted as well.

Given the high acceptance rate for management’s offer at Humber as well as the union recommendation to reject, we wondered what had prompted so many faculty to vote yes....so we asked you:

If you voted to ACCEPT management’s offer, please identify your reasons for doing so:



Responses:

‘Avoiding a strike in the current economic situation’ was clearly the most common reason given by our respondents. Many suggested that factor overrode all other considerations. Through the comment section many faculty identified the potential negative impact of a strike on students, a feeling that the union had not clearly made the case for refusing the offer, a

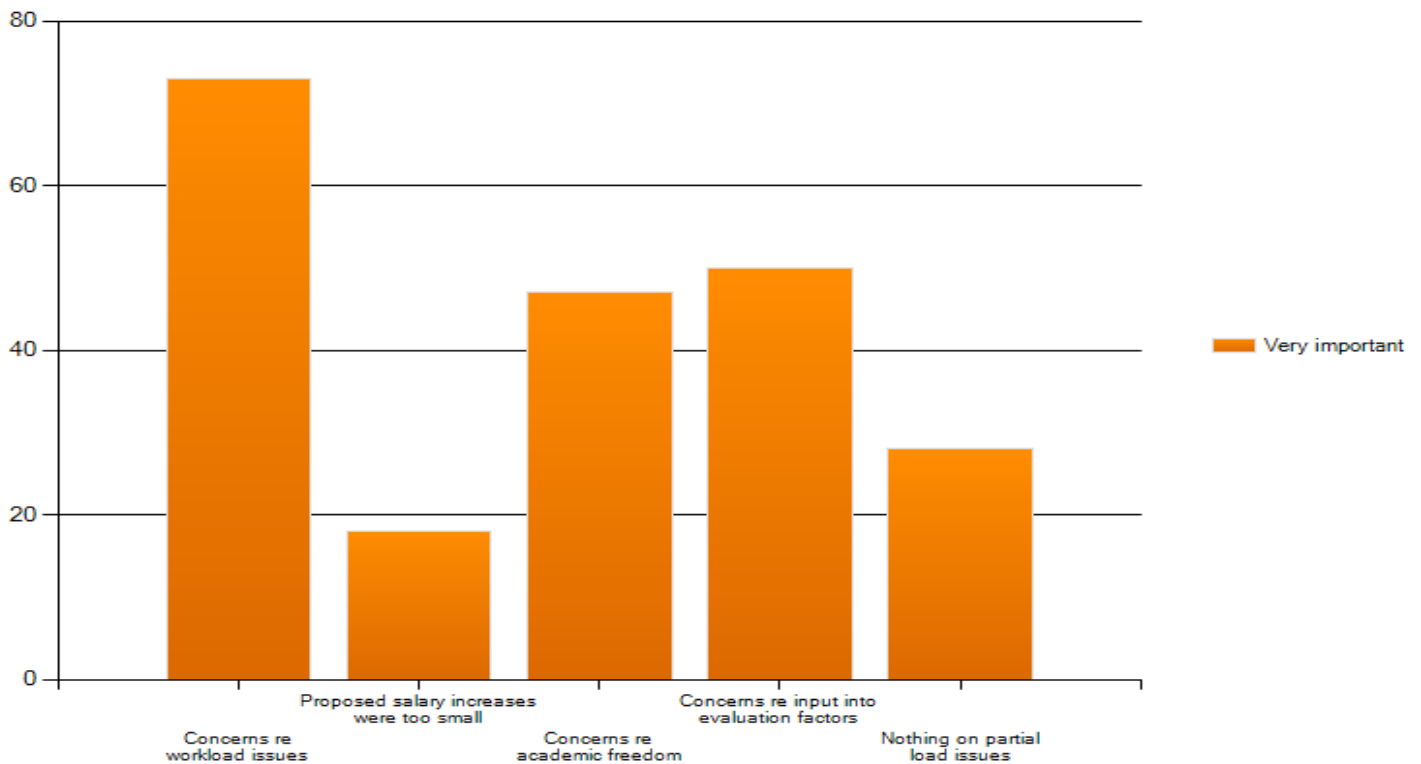
desire for a more professional tone in negotiations, and ultimately a better system to deal with contracts, such as binding arbitration.

Implications?

Evidently, we, the local and the union, need to work on improving our communication materials as described in previous questions. The responses also indicate that faculty are concerned with the bigger question of our system of labour-management relations in the colleges.

While we wanted to know why so many faculty voted yes, we were also very curious to find out what prompted others to vote against management’s offer. Here is what we found:

If you voted to REJECT management’s offer, please identify your reasons for doing so:



Responses:

Clearly, concerns regarding workload issues were the number 1 concern among these respondents, followed by concerns regarding academic freedom and evaluation factors. By far the most common response in the comment section of this question was the issue of management’s approach to the negotiations – the imposition, then the take-aways, the lack of collegiality.

Another factor identified by several faculty was the negative long term implications of the proposed changes.

Implications?

There are many issues that faculty feel are important. Workload is significant for many. How do we reach out and find out more about faculty concerns?

As we wanted to give faculty free scope in identifying the priority issue for themselves, we made an open comment section to address this. We have simply collated these responses by category to give an overview.

When asked: “ What was the priority issue for you in this last round of negotiations?”

<u>Issue</u>	<u># of responses</u>
Workload (includes quality of education)	76
Salary	34
Partial Load issues	25
Avoiding a strike	22
College imposing the contract on faculty	16

<u>Issue</u>	<u># of responses (con't)</u>
Academic Freedom	16
Collegiality	9
Need for more F/T faculty	7
Benefits	5
Provincial Gov't – funding/legislation	3

Implications?

Various concerns about workload headed the list as the priority issue for many, but there were also many other issues raised. We need to keep all of these priorities in mind as we plan for the future .

The final set of questions gave faculty members the opportunity to address their particular concerns to a specific target audience. As people often avoid survey questions that require individual responses, we wondered if we would get many comments. We did! These were perhaps the most interesting responses in the survey. We have attempted to sort the comments into a framework which can be used to look more closely at the responses and suggest needed changes to the way things work.

The first target group was “Our Local Executive”. Comments related to:

- ❑ The need for better or different communications
 - we got lots of suggestions ranging from the type of language we use, the frequency of our bulletins, the format, the need to be more specific and relevant to the Humber experience, and more
- ❑ Congratulations on a job well done
 - it was good to get some positive feedback - thanks
- ❑ Reasons for the disconnect between the faculty and the Local Executive
 - There were many different reasons identified including requests to be more accessible, to deal more with Humber issues, to make more frequent contact with faculty, to “listen” more, to help P/L faculty
- ❑ Suggestions for increasing input from faculty
 - Comments included lots of specifics – more surveys, more small meetings to discuss issues and articulate scenarios, the need to mobilize by school as there are different issues in different schools, more advance notice of meetings, the need to ask for faculty opinions, the need to get involved with new faculty and partial load faculty before a crisis

Implications:

You've given us lots to think about and many specifics to work on. We'll try hard to implement the suggested changes this spring and in the months ahead.

The next target group was “Our Negotiating Team”. Comments related to:

- ❑ Need for a change in approach
 - Many felt that the team was too antagonistic, that a more collaborative approach is essential to better bargaining, need to get away from “Them” and “us”
 - Need more communication, earlier, with lots of specifics
 - Can we not lose the strike option – instead: work to rule, giving all of the students an 80?
 - Identify only a few key issues for bargaining, then negotiate
- ❑ Need for a more visible bargaining team
 - faculty need to get to know the team – perhaps a meeting at each of the colleges with the team members before bargaining starts
 - need more of a physical presence from the team
- ❑ Thanks for a difficult job
- ❑ Suggestions for future bargaining teams
 - get the publicity campaign started early
 - need to explain better to students and the public – must “market” our position, public doesn't get 'workload'
 - use Facebook
 - get something for P/L – seniority, forget about the rest
 - don't underestimate faculty's fear of a strike

Implications?

Many specific, concrete suggestions – we'll pass this on and make sure the next bargaining team gets the information too. Many of these suggestions require a change in the negotiation process – that is, both sides have to be willing to change. We'll raise these concerns over the next few years, in many different ways, to work toward change.

The next target group was the “College Bargaining Team”. Comments included:

- ❑ Negotiate, Don't dictate
 - Can respectfully disagree, work with the union
 - Imposing the offer was “beyond the pale”, insulting
 - Tactics used were heavy handed and uncalled for
 - Focus on quality education, not defeating the union
 - If necessary, go to arbitration
- ❑ Show us some respect – we do care about quality of education
 - Recognize that colleges have very qualified faculty who have given up good salaries to teach
 - Trust your employees and respect them
 - Explain why you were so against the proposals
- ❑ Educate yourselves about the real impact of so few F/T faculty
 - Think of us as more than just a cost – our skill, enthusiasm, and knowledge are at the heart of Humber's value
 - Team members should have current involvement with the colleges
 - This is about education not profits, not about short term gain

Implications?

We know the college negotiating team has a job to do, but it needs to change the approach. The members need to recognize and respect the faculty.

The next target group was “OPSEU”. Comments included:

- ❑ Need a new approach
 - Aggressive tone is no longer effective
 - Strikes are out, we need to find a better way
 - Is OPSEU the best place for CAAT?
 - Is a provincial union the best for the colleges?
- ❑ Need better communication
 - Website was great – but too little, too late
 - Need to educate the public on the importance of unions
 - Need effective PR to mobilize the public
 - Speak to us as professionals, not in slogans
- ❑ Where were you when the changes in legislation happened?
 - Lobby to fix Bill 90
- ❑ Start the next campaign NOW
 - Educate the public, the media, faculty, administration
 - Start PR campaign in the September of the contract year

Implications?

We have to make the case that OPSEU and unions can effectively represent academics. We need to get an effective PR campaign and we need to start now. We'll give the message to OPSEU at this spring's convention.

The next target group was “Humber College”. Comments included:

- ❑ Many said it's a good place to work
 - but the decreasing number of F/T faculty are changing Humber and this needs to be reversed
 - asked Humber to live up to its commitment to improve faculty relations, resolve key issues
- ❑ Quality of education here is decreasing
 - some asked why only the college decision makers don't see this
 - increasing workload is destructive to staff, students, and college's reputation
- ❑ Not a factory
 - Negotiate, don't impose
 - Collaborate with faculty – not top-down decisions
 - Treat all employees with respect
- ❑ Voted against a strike, not for the contract – remember that
- ❑ P/L want to do a good job – we put in time and effort – give us enough hours
- ❑ Admin salary vs Faculty salary
 - many comments related to the need for more full-time faculty and the need to spend the money on faculty for full-time hires, pro-dev, curriculum development

- The Business of Humber
 - no profit in a damaged/destroyed community college educational system
 - the business of Humber is education – the focus should be on the students
 - stop saying you need more classrooms – you need more full-time teachers
 - remember – your strength is your teachers – more course development and time to stay current – results in more creative classrooms and more satisfied students and means you can market Humber as a place with great teachers

Implications?

Humber has worked hard to create the impression that it is different, better. If this is really to be true, there are many suggestions that have been made here to make Humber a great institution – Humber management needs to listen to the faculty.

The final target group is the “Provincial Government”. Comments include:

- Better funding for college education is critical
 - need to look at the college system – chart a course for the future
 - you give money for space – but need more faculty with more students
 - community college professors - want to be excellent teachers and we are – our focus in on teaching, not research – yet we are valued so much less than university professors – why?
 - look at where the money is going in the college system – administration
 - what about technological education?
 - need to protect college education
- Need new approach to labour relations
 - should be negotiating with the provinces and the colleges and the faculty
 - need binding arbitration
 - provincial gov’t needs to get more involved in a meaningful way – be a leader
- Why was legislation so one-sided (bill 90)
 - why did you change the rules?
 - change the legislation again – require binding arbitration – protect students

Implications?

The government needs to take a much more direct role in the colleges, in bargaining and in better funding. How can we, all of us – individual faculty, union local, OPSEU – get that message across?

We’ve given you an overview of the survey results and our ideas regarding the implications of the results. What do you think of the results? What implications do you draw? Let us know – call us, write a letter to the Newsbreak editor, stop by and chat. We really do want to know.

Note: More detailed results are posted at humberfacultyunion.org