

Bargaining backgrounder

Faculty representation on York's Board of Governors:

A key issue in negotiations

In the current round of bargaining, YUFA has placed a strong emphasis on collegial governance. For example, we have proposals for making searches for deans and administrators more inclusive and open and for limiting the power of deans to alter recruitment committee shortlists and to overturn hiring recommendations made by units. We are also proposing that there be more inclusive representation on the University Budget Advisory Committee, and that the financial information created by that committee be made more transparent.

Governance was tied with compensation as the top issue for YUFA members in the bargaining survey, held before the bargaining proposals were prepared. These proposals respond to this membership concern.

One topic that has not attracted much attention among members is the long-standing lack of faculty representation on York's Board of Governors. According to new data available from a recent OCUFA survey of university governance structures and procedures at Ontario universities, **York appears to have the lowest level of faculty participation on its governing board:**

1. York is the only university in the province where there is no minimum required number of faculty members on the Board.
2. York's Board of Governors currently includes approximately half the number of faculty members (2) compared to the average (4.3) for similar institutions (see table below).
3. YUFA members who do serve on the Board are forced to relinquish their YUFA membership and the protections that go along with it. Members of other unions at York such as YUSA or CUPE 3903 are not required to surrender their union membership upon election to the Board.
4. Unlike other universities, there are no faculty members who are elected by their peers to serve on the board.
5. Faculty members are excluded from the Executive Committee of the Board.

YUFA's proposals address each of these deficiencies. We are proposing that, in addition to two Senators elected by Senate, there shall be two faculty members elected by the entire body of faculty members at York. This is a modest proposal that would leave York's level of faculty representation below average for Ontario universities. Moreover, we are proposing that YUFA members elected to the Board retain their YUFA membership, and that at least one full-time faculty member shall sit on the Executive Committee of the Board.

The table on the next page shows comparative data on faculty participation on Boards of Governors/Trustees across the Province. (We have excluded the University of Toronto, which has a unicameral system of governance that includes only a University Council, but no Senate.)

Faculty representation on Governing Board	York	Brock	Carleton	Laurier	McMaster	Ottawa	Ryerson	Waterloo	Windsor	Queen's	Trent
# of Board members	28	27	32	34	34	32	24	36	32		
Faculty members elected to Board by Senate	2 (need not be faculty members)	Chair of senate has an ex-officio seat.	2	3	3	2	0	7	4	1 (elected by University Council)	1
Faculty members elected to Board by faculty at large	0	3	2	2 (elected by the university faculty council)	4	2	3	0	0	2	2
Faculty members sit on Executive Committee of Board?	no	yes (1)	no	yes (1)	Usually not but there is no clear provision that excluded faculty from sitting on the board.	yes	yes	yes (1)	no	no	no (but may)
Members must surrender Faculty Association membership?	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes
Exclusion of officers of the Faculty Ass'n Executive from serving on Board?	yes	yes	yes	no	no	unclear	no	no	yes		