

To: MAUT Council
From: Prof. Víctor M. Muñoz-Fraticelli
Date: 12 April 2023
Re: Report of the Vice President (External) to MAUT Council

MEMORANDUM

My principal responsibility is to represent MAUT at the national and provincial bodies of which it is part, the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) and the Fédération québécoise des professeurs et professeurs d'université (FQPPU).

As such, I attended CAUT Council on November 25–26, 2022 in Ottawa (together with MAUT President Renee Sieber) and the Federal Council of the FQPPU on October 20–21, 2022 and February 23–24, 2023 in Montreal. The CAUT meeting saw important resolutions passed on academic freedom, research ethics board procedures, and the collapse of Laurentian University in Ontario.

The October 2022 meeting of the FQPPU focused on prospective relations with the incoming minister of higher education. Former VP (External) of MAUT, Simon Rousseau, was elected interim member of the FQPPU executive council. At the February meeting of the FQPPU elections for the new executive were held. The only candidate for President failed to gather a majority of votes and the election was postponed until the April Federal Council.

At FQPPU I was informed that this academic term has witnessed significant gains in salary and working conditions for faculty associations in other universities across Québec. The faculty union at the *Université de Sherbrooke* obtained reductions to workload and gains to equity and transparency in the negotiation of its collective agreement. The administration's reluctance to make concessions on salaries occasioned a last-minute vote authorizing strike action, although the strike was not called because the university quickly capitulated.

The faculty union at the *Université de Québec en Outaouais* successfully negotiated workload reductions, salary increases and protection against cuts in faculty positions, as well as an increase to \$2,250 of their professional development fund, and a separate faculty research fund.

The situation was more contested at the *Université de Laval*, where the faculty union went on its longest-ever strike since the creation of the union in the 1970s. The demands of Laval professors were essentially the same as those of other professors across the province and the country: a reduction of administrative and teaching workload, better access to research funds, the protection of academic freedom and more transparent and genuinely collegial governance, and assurances for vulnerable academic staff, including untenured and contract academics.

After more than four weeks of strike, and with the intervention of a mediator, the Laval professors were successful in all of their demands, including a commitment of 80 new tenure-track faculty lines, a shift in decision-making power to the faculty, and a salary increase of 15.6% over the next three years. It should be noted that the union covered the full net salary of all union members for the duration of the strike, and maintained their life and health insurance coverage.

Outside Québec, at this time, there is an ongoing faculty strike at the University of Prince Edward Island, and a strike by various academic employees at Carleton University.