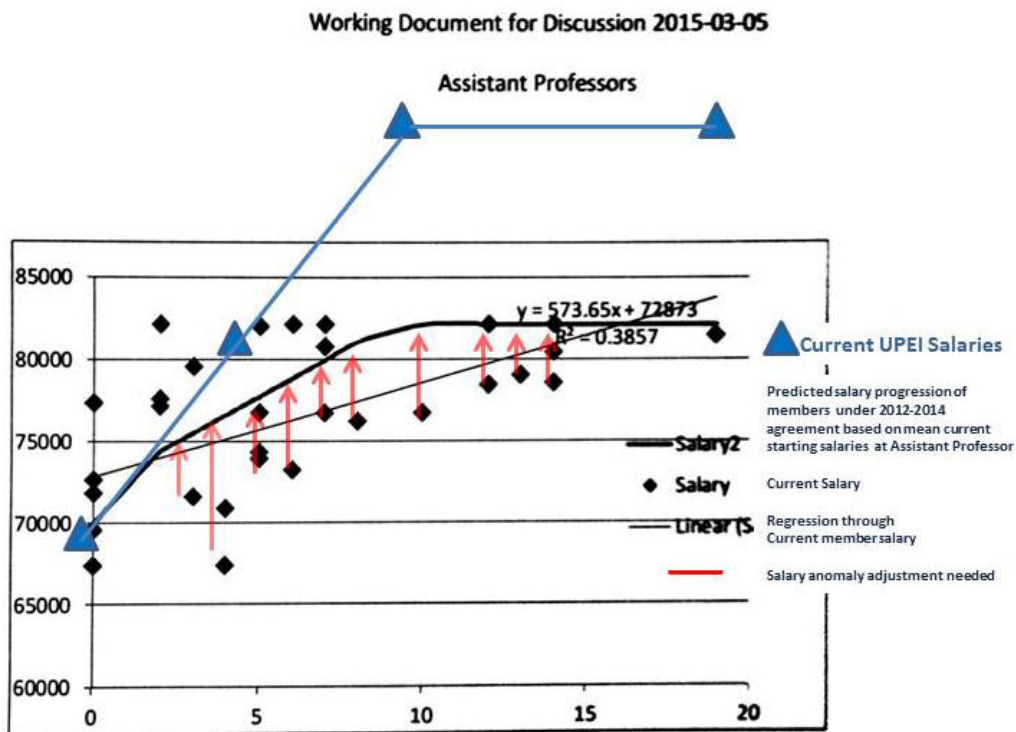


The bargaining team visited the picket lines early this morning and were heartened and invigorated to see our members setting up for the first strike day.

We met with the employer's team at 9:30am. They had prepared overnight some scatterplots of our members' salaries that clearly demonstrated how dispersed our members' salaries are. Many are even far below *where they should be under the 2012--2014 agreement*.

For example, the scatterplot below, drawn for assistant professors (the same issues show up at all ranks), shows how far our current salaries are out of step with even where they should be under the old agreement: that is, our salary structure is replete with anomalies that have gone unaddressed by the existing salary anomaly process. The diagram the employer's team prepared clearly demonstrated the problems with our existing salary distribution; and this is without considering how out of line our salaries are with those of our comparator institutions. (UPEI has been added to the diagram below to illustrate the latter issue.)



Black and white base graph presented at negotiating table by UNBC employer

The UNBC employer's team informed us that it would cost more than half a million dollars to bring members' salaries to where they should be under the 2012--2014 agreement. The Employer should have dealt with this salary anomaly issue previously under the 2012--2014 agreement, rather than now at the bargaining table.

The current position of the Employer is that correcting salary anomalies will be costed as a wage increase in this agreement, despite the fact that the 2012--2014 agreement contains an article designated for this very purpose.

We spent the rest of the day seeking from the employer a response to the last tabled proposal – a proposal from the FA – that would address these compensation issues. The employer has to this point refused to table a counter-proposal and instead continues to insist on a merit scheme that will do nothing to address the fundamental problems.

The teams have decided to meet next on Friday morning. With our members off the job and on the pavements, we sincerely hope that the employer will have a new tabled proposal.

Many thanks to all of you for your good cheer and your amazing solidarity.