

# Faculty Unions and Faculty Salaries

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# What do Unions Do?

- Voice
  - Coordination,
    - e.g., benefits packages that we like
  - Do a better job,
    - e.g., kill time-wasting in learning assessment
- Power to Extract
  - Salaries
  - Other costly goals
    - e.g, make classes smaller and better; funds for research for faculty without external funds.
- Un-unionized Faculty Associations do this, too

# Salaries

- There is evidence on this
- Cross-sectional
  - Compare faculty salaries between union to non-union faculties
- Panel
  - Compare faculty salaries over time when non-union faculties unionize or when faculty unions decertify

# Average Salaries

- Porter 2013 has a lit review on this in *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*
- Cross-sectional evidence:
  - “unionized faculty earn more than nonunionized faculty (Birnbaum 1974; Barbezat 1989; Ashraf 1992, 1997; Rees, Kumar, and Fisher 1995; Monks 2000; Benedict 2007)”
    - a few percentage points of salary
  - “Or little difference (Kesselring 1991; Rees 1993; Hosios and Siow 2004)”.
- “Recent studies using panel data have found that unionization has no apparent effect on the level of faculty compensation (Martinello 2009; Hedrick et al. 2011).”
- FYI, Rees (1993), Hosios and Siow (2004) and Martinello (2009) use Canadian data

# Seriously, No Effect on Average Salaries?

- Not so crazy actually
  - Where would the money come from to raise salaries?
    - Redirect from admin ‘waste’
    - Student fees
    - Government
- Power to strike?
  - faculties are pretty reluctant to strike because, roughly speaking, we care a lot about students.
  - So, this power might not get us so many \$

# Salary Distribution

- Martinello (2009) compares within universities over time as they unionize
  - data from Ontario universities
  - Unions don't affect average salaries
  - “unionized faculty and faculty with special plans experienced similar patterns of flattening in salary profiles by age and rank.”
    - Special plans are contracts that give a faculty association the right to negotiate some terms of employment with the administration as well as some recourse to dispute resolution procedures such as mediation, fact finding, and third party arbitration.
  - Arbitration favours faculty slightly (1.7%)

# Salary Distribution

- If more aggregate \$ is not really feasible, what will a unionized SFUFA pursue in terms of the distribution of salaries?
- SFUFA has in the past made the case that with so many faculty 'off the grid', that our salary negotiations are a bit 'fake'.
- Would a unionized SFUFA divert resources from 'off the grid' salary improvements towards scale improvements?

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