

# CUPE 3913

Teaching Assistants and Sessional Lecturers at the University of Guelph

## NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2023

### FEATURED TOPICS

#### What's going on?

- Fall Tabling Schedule
- Members in Good Standing
- New Website Launch
- Winter Membership Meeting on Jan 24 @ 7pm, UC 442
- Are You Tracking Your Hours?
- End of Year Benefits processing
- Union Closure from Dec 18 - Jan 2

#### Learn more about...

- Bargaining Updates
- Appointments for Sessional Lecturers
- **Get to Know Your Union:** Safia Mahabub Sauty, CUPE3913 Equity Officer
- **Benefits:** know your benefits and claim up to \$600/\$1200 (Unit 1/Unit 2)
- **Special Discounts for CUPE 3913 members:** car and home insurance, Ford & Lincoln vehicles
- Student Wellness Support Resources
- Contact information

# What's going on

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## FALL TABLING SCHEDULE

Come visit us at the UC Courtyard from **10:00am-2:00pm** at these following dates to learn more about the union, bargaining, and to ask us any questions!

- December 6
- December 13



## MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING



We would like to encourage all those who have not become a Member in Good Standing (MGS) yet to consider doing so! Having many MGS demonstrates to the University that we are a strong Union, allowing us to push for initiatives that can improve the working and living conditions for TAs and Sessionals (e.g., higher wages, job security, fair work conditions). If you're not an MGS yet, sign up now by filling out the online form [here](#) or scanning the QR code on the left.

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# What's going on

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## NEW WEBSITE LAUNCH

With the launch of the new website, we want to address some important information to our members:

- The address remains the same <https://cupe3913.on.ca/>
- Your login is your uoguelph or guelphhumber email address
- Members will be required to change their password during their first login.
- Please update your member profile and add family members if needed

### Claims

- To submit a claim,
  - Select "My Account"(top right)
  - From the pulldown menu select the type of claim that you would like to make( ie: Unit 1 claim, EFAF claim or Unit 2 claim)
  - Select "New Claim" Enter the claim information, click next
  - On the next page upload your claim documents and click submit.
- We have changed the structure of the benefits plan
  - **Unit 1 members:** the limit of \$300 for vision & \$300 for mental health has changed to \$600 in total for vision/mental health claims. Members can use the \$600 for either expense and for any amount up to \$600.
  - Mental health claims are now being reimbursed at 100%.
  - **Unit 2 members:** the limit of \$1000 and \$200 for prescriptions has changed to \$1200 for any medical expense currently covered under the benefits program.
- EFAF claims are now being processed through the members portal. We are no longer processing EFAF claims via email.
- EFAF application forms are no longer required.
- **Unit 1 -** please be reminded to ***submit health claims first to their primary insurance provider*** (CanadaLife through the GSA), and be sure to submit an "explanation of benefits" when submitting your claim to CUPE

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# What's going on

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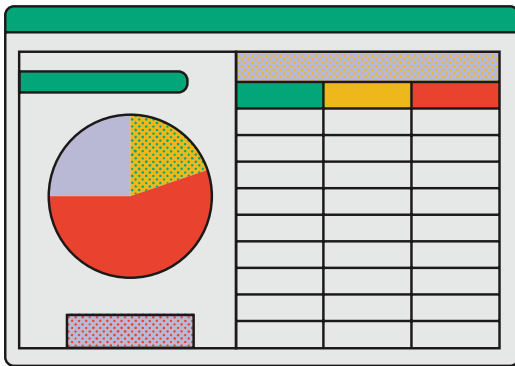
## WINTER MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Join us on January 24th @ 7pm in UC 442 for updates on the state of the union and bargaining! This meeting will be hybrid, the zoom link for those cannot attend in person is linked here:

Food and drinks will be provided in-person



## ARE YOU TRACKING YOUR HOURS?



As we approach the end of the semester, we would like to remind members to make sure you continue to track your hours and let your supervisor know if you are nearing the end of your hours!



During this time, we would also like to remind members to please report and document any workplace accidents that may have occurred during your work term.

Contact our health and safety officer, Ahmed, [hs@cupe3913.on.ca](mailto:hs@cupe3913.on.ca) if you have any questions or concerns.

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# What's going on

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## END OF YEAR BENEFITS PROCESSING

Please submit your benefits claim on the week of December 11 as it will be the last time benefits will be processed this year. If you submit during this time, you may not receive your cheque until early in the new year



## UNION CLOSURE FROM DECEMBER 18-JANUARY 2

*Happy  
Holidays*

The union will be closed on December 18 and will reopen on January 2.

During this time, we wish members a restful holiday break!

**Happy Holidays from CUPE3913!**

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# Learn more about...

## BARGAINING UPDATES

We encourage members to keep an eye out on their email for bargaining updates. CUPE3913 is sending bargaining small bargaining blasts with a few insights into the union's negotiations with the university.

## FALL 2023 BARGAINING SO FAR

As we near the end of the Fall 2023 semester, our impression is that bargaining is moving along. Currently, we are tackling all non-monetary proposals. Even at this stage, we are still getting push-back from the university on some issues such as **Sessional Job Security**. However, we are still making progress and pushing back to serve our members' best interests.

## BARGAINING GOING FORWARD

We are aiming to present the university our monetary proposals in the new year. During this time, we want all members to be engaged and informed so keep an eye out for updates from your union in Winter 2024. Please feel free to contact us at [bargaining.committee@cupe3913.on.ca](mailto:bargaining.committee@cupe3913.on.ca) if you have any questions.

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# Learn more about...

## **CUPE 3913**

***We are bargaining a new Collective Agreement on behalf of TAs and Sessional Instructors***

We believe that the University is enacting changes that will reduce the quality of education at UofG, and the quality of life of its TAs and Sessionals

**The changes we are proposing will help address these issues:**

### **Improving wages and education for all our members**

- Tuition reimbursement
- PhD Completion Fund
- Pedagogical training



### **Improving Job Security for Sessional Instructors**

- Improved Right of First Refusal
- Shortlisted for faculty jobs

### **Expanding health benefits**

- More money for mental health issues



### **Addressing exploitation of International students**

- Higher wages to offset high tuition

The graphic above demonstrates the four main focuses of our proposals we are bringing to the table with the university. If you have any questions about bargaining, the proposals we are bringing forth, or how you can get involved, please do not hesitate to contact us!

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# Learn more about...

## CUPE3913 BARGAINING TIMELINE



During the whole bargaining process, we are going to be updating the members through social media, emails, and bargaining blasts that will summarize what went on during the bargaining meeting.

It is our goal to be as **TRANSPARENT** as possible to our members and to ensure members we are doing our best to bargain for a better collective agreement.

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Learn more about...

## APPOINTMENTS FOR SESSIONAL LECTURERS

We often receive questions regarding appointments to positions involving open competitions for sessional lecturers. This information is general and does not specifically speak to appointments for TAs or positions that hold **Right of First Refusal (RoFR)**.

Please refer to Appendix F of our Unit 2 collective agreement to see how competing RoFR's are decided upon. When there is an open competition for a sessional lecturer position and two or more candidates apply and the qualifications are demonstrably equal, then the most senior candidate should receive the appointment.

As per Article 11 of our collective agreement, before the hiring, a selection committee must establish a rubric for evaluating applicants' application. The rubric will be specific for the position and could include things like education, publications, previous teaching experience in the area, other work experience, seniority points, etc.

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Learn more about...

## APPOINTMENTS FOR SESSIONAL LECTURERS

One candidate may have strengths in one area and another candidate has strength in a different area. On the rubric, the areas would be scored for each applicant. If two candidates are relatively equal, then the most senior candidate should receive the offer. If a lower senior candidate is demonstrably more qualified, as per the rubric, then the lower senior candidate would receive the job offer.

If you believe you should have received an offer but did not, feel free to reach out to our Labour Relations Coordinator, Jeff at **[labourrelations@cupe3913.on.ca](mailto:labourrelations@cupe3913.on.ca)**.

We can discuss your specific concern and we can contact the University for more information around that specific hiring decision. It is worth questioning if you have questions regarding hiring.

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# Get to know YOUR union



## ALYSSA BANAAG CUPE3913 VICE PRESIDENT INTERNAL (VPI)

**Program:** Molecular and Cellular Biology

**What is the role of the “Vice President Internal”:** The VPI is the internal representative of the local. The VPI, in partnership with the Vice President External, assist the President with the smooth running of the local through executive member coordination and conflict resolution. The VPI is responsible for all communications between the Executive Committee and the membership!

## WHAT IS ONE THING YOU ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO IN BARGAINING?

I am looking forward to having members engaged and fighting for our monetary proposals to be passed!

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# Understanding CUPE 3913's Health Benefits

Grad students have benefits through the GSA; as workers, Units 1 and 2 are entitled to *\*additional benefits* offered by CUPE 3913:

- Supplemental health benefits **cover the academic year** (Sept 1-Aug 31); **claims must be submitted by Aug 31**
- Members are entitled to benefits for up to 1 year following their last work assignment
- Must use GSA benefits before you access your CUPE benefits
- Claims can be made through our website
  - FAQs re: how to submit a claim online + more info on benefits are also available on our site
  - Questions? [benefits@cupe3913.on.ca](mailto:benefits@cupe3913.on.ca)

## UNIT 1 (TAs and GSA-1s):

- \$600 total for vision and mental health claims

## UNIT 2 (Sessional Lecturers):

- Any expense under the Income Tax Act 118.2(2) up to \$1200, including
  - Dental
  - Prescription drugs
  - Vision care
  - Physiotherapy
  - Massage therapy
  - Chiropractic
- Prescription drugs

# EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTIES IN YOUR ROLE AS A WORKER? WE CAN HELP

Our Labor relations Coordinator is here to advise you

Reach out to Jeffrey Cornelissen  
[labourrelations@cupe3913.on.ca](mailto:labourrelations@cupe3913.on.ca) to discuss the  
issue and get insights into possible solutions.

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Some things to know about resolving work issues

**The earlier you contact us, the better**

If an issue has arisen, contact us as soon as possible with the pertinent details so that we can offer you guidance on how to proceed.

**You are in charge of all decisions**

There are many ways a work issue can be resolved; we can lay out your options so that you can make an informed decision that works best for you. However, only *you* will decide what will happen.

# EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTIES IN YOUR ROLE AS A WORKER? WE CAN HELP

## One option is an informal resolution

The Union can bring the issue to the Office of Faculty and Academic Staff Relations (FASR) in the hopes that it will be addressed appropriately. We will discuss with you how we will present the problem to FASR to ensure your comfort. Note that we are able to settle the vast majority of issues through this route.

## Another option is to file a grievance

If the matter is more serious or is not resolved appropriately through the informal route, we can file a formal grievance (though only if this is a route that you choose).

## What is a grievance?

A grievance is a complaint put forth by the Union articulating that the employer has acted (or failed to act) in a way that violates the Collective Agreement. A grievance by the Union on behalf of the member.

Find more information about grievances and the grievance process on our website [here](#).



# HAVING MONEY PROBLEMS?



## Apply for the Emergency Financial Assistance Fund (EFAF)

Unit 1 members (TAs) experiencing financial hardships may apply for up to \$500 in financial assistance per academic year. To be eligible, you must have had a work assignment within the past year

How do I apply?

- Visit our website at [cupe3913.on.ca](http://cupe3913.on.ca), login, and under the “my account” tab you can submit an EFAF Claim



## Take advantage of CUPE 3913's discounts

### Car and home insurance

CUPE members receive a discount at Economical Insurance AND can win 1 of 36 cash prizes of \$5,000 when you call for a quote.

[www.nationalbrokers.com](http://www.nationalbrokers.com) or call 905-597-3390

### Discounts on Ford and Lincoln vehicles

CUPE members are part of the Partner Recognition X-Plan Vehicle Pricing Program that gives you special pricing on many makes and models.

[www.fordpartner.com](http://www.fordpartner.com)



## STUDENT RESOURCES

The following services are available to students. Virtual, phone and in-person appointments available as guidelines allow.

### Student Wellness Services:

\*All located in the J.T. Powell Building, on the first floor. 8:30am – 4:30pm (check online for individual services and hours)

#### Health Services – x52131

- Drop-In Clinic as well as booked appointments with doctors

#### Counselling Services – x53244

- Drop-in Counselling. Fall/Winter Mon to Fri: 1pm-3:30pm

#### Wellness Education & Promotion Centre – x53327

- Email to discuss training options and to book a training [mentalhealth.training@uoguelph.ca](mailto:mentalhealth.training@uoguelph.ca)

#### Student Support Network

- Peer-to-peer support. Fall/Winter Mon-Fri: 12pm-10pm [wellness.uoguelph.ca/ssn](http://wellness.uoguelph.ca/ssn)

#### Accessibility Services – x56208

- Students requiring academic accommodations because of a disability (temporary or permanent)

\*Current information on Student Wellness Services' hours and locations: [wellness.uoguelph.ca](http://wellness.uoguelph.ca)

## OTHER RESOURCES

**Mental Health Training**  
[morefeetontheground.ca](http://morefeetontheground.ca)

**Feeling Better Now**  
[feelingbetternow.com/uoguelph](http://feelingbetternow.com/uoguelph)

## AVAILABLE AT ALL TIMES

**Campus Community Police**  
Trent Building on Campus  
x2000 or 519-840-5000; [uoguelph.ca/police](http://uoguelph.ca/police)

**Here 24/7 Crisis Line (Guelph or K-W)**  
1-844-437-3247 or  
CMHA Crisis Line (Ontario) 1-833-456-4566

**Text Crisis Line**  
Text UOFG to 686868

**Good2Talk Crisis Line**  
1-86-925-5454

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE RESOURCES

**Sexual Violence Support Services on Campus (Non-Urgent)**  
x53020, Mon. to Fri.: 8:30am – 4:30pm  
[svinfo@uoguelph.ca](mailto:svinfo@uoguelph.ca)

**Women In Crisis - 1-800-265-7233**  
24-Hour Crisis Support for Sexual or Domestic Violence. All genders welcome.

**Guelph General Hospital Care and Treatment Centre for Sexual and Domestic Violence**  
153 Delhi Street, 519-837-6440 x2728  
or call x2210 After Hours

**Sexual Violence Support & Information**  
[wellness.uoguelph.ca/sexual-violence-support](http://wellness.uoguelph.ca/sexual-violence-support)

## STAFF RESOURCES

### Employee & Family Assistance Program (EFAP)

The EFAP is available to eligible employees and their immediate family members in need of confidential, professional counselling for personal, family, relationship, and wellness issues.

Access at any time: 1-800-663-1142 or contact the Manager of Occupational Health and Wellness at x5213

Responding to Students in Distress

# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND STAFF CONTACT

## Executive

President

Scott Duchesne

Vice-President Internal

Alyssa Banaag

Vice-President External

Alexis Fabricius

Unit 1 Steward

Kathleen Nolan

Unit 2 Steward

Kyle Novak

Grievance Officer

Kimber Munford

Health & Safety Officer

Ahmed Mahmood

Equity Officer

Safia Mahabub Sauty

## Staff

Labour Relations

Coordinator

Jeff Cornelissen

Admin & Finance

Coordinator

Shelly Sarkisian