

CUPE 3913

Teaching Assistants and Sessional Lecturers at the University of Guelph

NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2024

FEATURED TOPICS

What's going on?

- **Announcements:**
 - Update re: UofG's continued attacks on graduate students
 - Consider applying to be our new Elections Officer!
 - Sign the petition for UofG to re-instate payroll deduction
- **Upcoming events:**
 - UoG Unionized Employee Solidarity Social - November 13
 - Sovereign Science Event - November 21
 - Tabling schedule for F24 semester
- **Reminders**
 - Track your hours!
 - Become a member in good standing (MGS)

Learn more about...

- **Appointments for Sessional Lecturers**
- **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: Announcements

Updates re: UofG's continued attacks on graduate students

This semester, the university has made **unprecedented changes** to the graduate student experience **without any consultation with impacted students.**

To recap, they have;

- 1. Removed the top-up for Tri-Agency scholarship recipients**, leaving students thousands of dollars short for their budgets this semester.
- 2. Removed the option to pay tuition via payroll deductions**, leaving hundreds of students scrambling to make ends meet.
- 3. Overseen a devastating payroll crisis** that has led to the complete depletion of our Financial Assistance Fund, which students rely on in times of great need.
- 4. Committed to end the tenancy of many graduate students in Family Housing** in favour of converting the units for undergraduates.

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What's going on: Announcements

Updates re: UofG's continued attacks on graduate students

1

Removal of Tri-Agency Scholarship Top-Up



The university removed the Tri-Agency scholarship top-up 3 weeks before the start of the F24 semester, despite the money already existing in student accounts. This top-up was explicitly stated in many students' offers of admission, and students budgeted around this. The removal of the top-up just before the commencement of the Fall 2024 semester meant that many students were unable to make ends meet, while university administrators unilaterally decided to undo the "materially significant" increases that graduate students fought hard to achieve at the federal level.

2

Removal of Payroll Deduction Option for Tuition Payment



The university removed the option to pay tuition via payroll deductions, a change which will start in the Winter 2025 semester. Only students currently using the payroll deduction grad settlement option were informed about the change, leaving students who had planned to utilize this option completely in the dark. The lack of consultation and communication with graduate students on this issue represents a direct attack on graduate students by the university administration.

At first, they offered for students to pay in three installments, one of which came out on January 10th, far too early in the semester for many students to pay. Now, after some advocacy from the GSA, they have offered a model where students can pay in seven installments, all of which come after a payday. However, the university still intends to implement the three-payment model starting in the summer of 2025. We know that the summer semester is often the most difficult financially, and we are worried about the impact this will have on our members.

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What's going on: Announcements

Updates re: UofG's continued attacks on graduate students

3

Payroll Crisis



The payroll crisis has left some members unpaid and others overpaid for months now. Our members have had to take out loans, visit payday lenders, take on credit card debt, and borrow money from friends and family in order to make ends meet, with zero recompense from the university for the additional emotional and financial strain this places on them. We have heard from many students who have considered taking leaves of absence or quitting their studies entirely due to this harmful financial decision by the university administration.

4

Grad Student Removal from Family Housing



The university has recently sent out notifications of the intention to end the tenancy of many graduate students in Family Housing. They wish to renovate these apartments for use as undergraduate housing to compensate for their dramatic increases in undergraduate enrollment, further limiting the access our members have to housing in and around campus. The university knows that it does not pay graduate students enough to afford equivalent housing off-campus, and yet they have made the decision to remove this option for graduate students.

These attacks come at a time where graduate students are increasingly precarious, and we know that they disproportionately harm International students. Please keep an eye on your email and our social media for further information on how we are advocating for you.

If you'd like to get involved, please email vpe@cupe3913.on.ca who can let you know about open union positions. If you want to have your voice heard on these issues, please come to our virtual Open Forum - details will be announced soon, please keep an eye on your email and our social media pages.

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What's going on: Announcements

Consider applying to be our new Elections Officer!



CUPE 3913 is looking for an
ELECTIONS
OFFICER

Election runs in W24 semester
Position comes with honorarium

- Must be a current member of CUPE 3913
- Strong organizational skills
- Experience working in unions or student government an asset

Join our team!

SEND AN EMAIL OUTLINING YOUR INTEREST AND EXPERIENCE TO:

 president@cupe3913.on.ca

CUPE3913.ON.CA

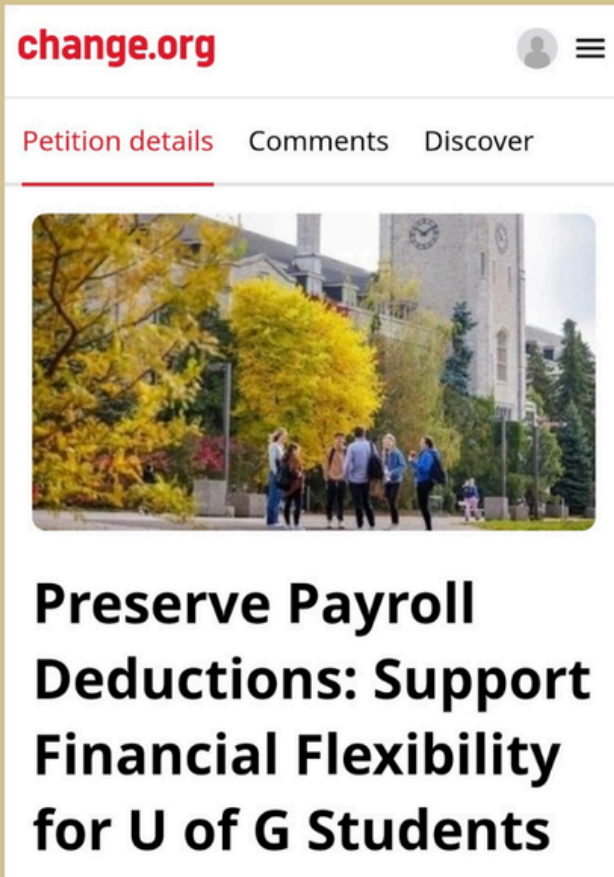
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What's going on: Announcements

Sign the petition for UofG to reinstate payroll deduction

Frustrated by UofG's removal of the payroll deduction option for tuition payment?



The screenshot shows the change.org website interface. At the top left is the 'change.org' logo. To the right is a user profile icon and a menu icon. Below the logo are three tabs: 'Petition details' (which is underlined in red), 'Comments', and 'Discover'. The main content area features a photograph of a university campus with yellow trees and a group of people walking. Below the photo is the petition title: 'Preserve Payroll Deductions: Support Financial Flexibility for U of G Students'.

So are we!

We encourage members to sign the change.org petition to push the university to reinstate this crucial program for grad students.



<https://tinyurl.com/2s59e24j>

The CUPE 3913 executive committee encourages all members to sign this petition to put pressure on the university to reinstate the payroll deduction option for tuition payments.

The petition started by Peer Helpers can be found at: <https://tinyurl.com/2s59e24j>

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What's going on: Events


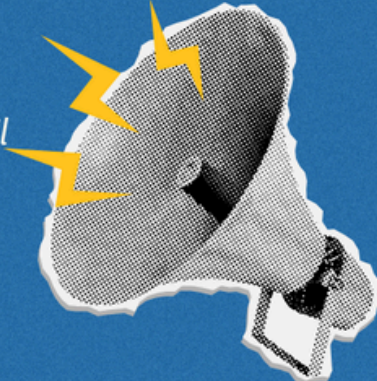
UoG Unionized Employee Solidarity Social

UoG Unionized Employee Solidarity Social

*"When we are siloed we are silenced."
- Nicole Clark, Guelph and District Labour Council*

November 13, 2024
11:00am - 2:00pm
Johnston Green

- ➔ FREE hot beverages, beavertails & lady glaze donuts
- ➔ Free swag + Raffles - including a winter parking pass!
- ➔ Music
- ➔ Community Engagement



RSVP here!



OSSTF/FEESO

UGFA



**CUPE
3913**

CUPE 3913 members, along with all unionized employees on campus, are invited to join the "UoG Unionized Employee Solidarity Social" on November 13, 2024, from 11 AM to 2 PM on Johnston Green. There will be free hot beverages, beaver tails, and Lady Glaze Donuts, as well as free swag and raffles with sweet prizes including a winter parking pass. Come join us for some awesome tunes and to connect with the union community to build solidarity on campus.

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What's going on: Events

Sovereign Science Event



Sovereign Science

Thursday, November 21, 2024,
2 - 4:30 PM

UofG Arboretum - Meeting in front of
OAC Centennial Arboretum Centre

Join Sovereign Science, an Indigenous-led Think Tank, for a guided hike through the Arboretum. We will talk about ecological kinship, the evolution of Indigenous presence at the United Nations, and the role of youth political engagement for climate and environmental research at international levels.

Please register by emailing sovscience@gmail.com

Thank you to our funders!



Join Sovereign Science and CUPE 3913 in the Arboretum on Thursday, November 21, 2024, from 2-4:30 PM for a guided walk and discussion about Indigenous-led climate justice and resilience.

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What's going on: Events

TABLING FOR FALL 2024 SEMESTER

TABLING SCHEDULE FOR F24 SEMESTER

OCT
9

All tabling will occur in the University Centre from 10 AM - 2 PM.

NOV
6

Stop by for some free coffee, swag items, and helpful information!

DEC
4



**CUPE
3913**

CUPE 3913 and GSA executives will be tabling in the UC this semester. Come visit us on October 9, November 6, and December 4 for some free coffee, swag items, and helpful information!

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What's going on: Reminders

TRACK YOUR HOURS!



CUPE 3913 would like to remind members to track their hours to prevent over-work.

If you are approaching the maximum number of hours allocated in your contract, contact your supervisor so hours can be re-allocated or overtime can be negotiated.

Remember that Unit 1 members (TAs) can spend a maximum of 24 hours/week on teaching duties.

To download CUPE 3913's hours-tracking spreadsheet, visit the link below.



Or visit:
<https://cupe3913.on.ca/Members/New-Members/Hours-Tracking>

Please make sure to track your hours for the Fall 2024 semester to prevent over-work. Please visit cupe3913.on.ca/Members/New-Members/Hours-Tracking. to access CUPE 3913's hours-tracking template, and make sure to review your contract and Collective Agreement to make sure you know your rights.

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What's going on: Reminders

BECOME A MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING

Become a Member **IN GOOD STANDING**

BECOME AN ACTIVE MEMBER AND VOTE ON IMPORTANT
ISSUES FOR TAs AND SESSIONAL LECTURERS!



**VISIT [HTTPS://CUPE3913.ON.CA/MEMBERS/UNIT-2-
SESSIONALS/BECOME-A-MGS](https://cupe3913.on.ca/members/unit-2-sessionals/become-a-mgs)**

Would you like to become an active union member and gain the ability to vote on issues that are important to TAs and sessional lecturers? If so, please become a Member in Good Standing by filling out the form at the above QR code or by visiting:
<https://cupe3913.on.ca/Members/Unit-2-Sessionals/Become-a-MGS>

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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.

One candidate may have strengths in one area while another candidate has strengths 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.

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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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 Sept 15
- 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

UNIT 1 (TAs and GSA-1s):

- \$600 total for vision, prescription, 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 to discuss the
issue and get insights into possible solutions.

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, 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 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



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

Student Support Network

- Peer-to-peer support. Fall/Winter Mon-Fri: 12pm-10pm 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

OTHER RESOURCES

Mental Health Training
morefeetontheground.ca

Feeling Better Now
feelingbetternow.com/uoguelph

AVAILABLE AT ALL TIMES

Campus Community Police

Trent Building on Campus
x2000 or 519-840-5000; 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

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

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

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND STAFF CONTACT

Executive

President

Scott Duchesne

Vice-President Internal

Kathleen Nolan

Vice-President External

Kimber Munford

Unit 1 Steward

Michael Yu

Unit 2 Steward

Evren Altinkas

Finance Officer

Angelica Nascimento de
Oliveira

Grievance Officer

Alexis Fabricius

Health & Safety Officer

Ahmed Mahmood

Equity Officer

Shruti Nadkarni

Staff

Labour Relations
Coordinator

Jeff Cornelissen

Admin & Finance
Coordinator

Shelly Sarkisian