

CUPE 3913

Teaching Assistants and Sessional Lecturers at the University of Guelph

NEWSLETTER MARCH 2024

FEATURED TOPICS

What's going on?

- Winter Tabling Dates
- Strike Mandate Vote Results
- Next Steps for Bargaining
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- Election Results
- Reminders for Unit 1 Members
- Benefits Processing

Learn more about...

- Bargaining Updates
- Appointments for Sessional Lecturers
- Mental Health First Aid
- **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

WINTER TABLING DATES



Our tabling will continue on in the winter semester! If you have any questions about the union, bargaining, benefits, or any inquiries, come find us in the UC Courtyard during the times of 10:00am-2:00pm on the following dates:

- Wednesday, March 13, 2024
- Wednesday, March 27, 2024

STRIKE MANDATE VOTE RESULTS



We would like to thank members who took the time to vote.

There was 1,130, or 92.5% of members who voted, voted YES for a strike mandate!



This is an amazing victory for our union and for our members. This demonstrates to our university on our willingness to strike for better working conditions!

Our work is not over and we will continue to push the university to give what our members deserve.

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What's going on

NEXT STEPS FOR BARGAINING

The union has filed for conciliation at the beginning of February and has continued negotiations. Now that we have concluded our strike mandate vote, you might wonder, “what are the next steps?” Below we will outline the next steps of the union, conciliator, and the university.

WHAT IS CONCILIATION AGAIN?

- Conciliation is a process by which a conciliation officer is appointed by the Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development to meet with the union and the employer to attempt to conclude a collective agreement.
- In that meeting, the conciliation officer tries to help the union and the employer resolve their differences so they can reach a collective agreement. There can be **TWO RESULTS**

IF CONCILIATION RESULTS IN AN AGREEMENT

- If the employer and the union settle their differences concerning the terms of the collective agreement during conciliation, the conciliation officer reports the results to the Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development.
- **A ratification vote** needs to be held before the new agreement can have effect.
 - Once a union and an employer have reached a tentative collective agreement, the union must ratify the agreement.
 - Generally speaking, bargaining unit employees ratify an agreement through a secret-ballot vote in which the majority of those voting vote in favour of ratification.

What's going on

NEXT STEPS FOR BARGAINING CONT'D

IF CONCILIATION DOES NOT RESULT IN AN AGREEMENT

- The conciliation officer will report the outcome to the Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development and the minister will send a written notice to the union and the employer.
- Typically, this notice will inform the parties that a board of conciliation will not be appointed. This is commonly known as a **"no-board"**.
- After the minister sends the notice, the union and the employer continue to have a duty to bargain in good faith and attempt to reach an agreement.
- Until a collective agreement has been concluded, the union and the employer have different options depending on the circumstances, including the following options.

1. IF THE PARTIES ARE ABLE TO ENGAGE IN A LEGAL STRIKE OR LOCKOUT

- The release of the "no-board" notice begins the countdown to the date on which either the employer or the union could begin a legal work stoppage.

2. IF THE PARTIES ARE NOT ABLE, OR HAVE A LIMITED ABILITY, TO STRIKE OR LOCK OUT

- the release of the "no-board" notice in a compulsory interest arbitration or essential services framework generally enables them to proceed to interest arbitration to resolve the dispute, where applicable.

What's going on

NEXT STEPS FOR BARGAINING CONT'D

3. PARTIES MAY AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN VOLUNTARY INTEREST ARBITRATION

- the parties may at any time following the giving of notice of desire to bargain under the Labour Relations Act (section 16 or 59), irrevocably agree in writing to refer all matters remaining in dispute between them to an arbitrator or a board of arbitration for final and binding determination.

4. EMPLOYER MAY REQUEST A LAST-OFFER VOTE

- At any time before or after a strike or lock-out begins, an employer may ask the Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development to direct a vote of the employees in the affected bargaining unit to accept or reject the employer's last offer to the union on all matters remaining in dispute between the parties.

We will continue to keep members informed about the bargaining process and what steps we need to take together with the membership.

Summary of the timeline for bargaining can be found on page 11

Information on the collective bargaining process was found from <https://www.ontario.ca/page/collective-bargaining#section-6>

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What's going on

CALL FOR PICKET CAPTAINS

If we take strike action, we will need **Picket Captains** - please consider helping us push for the improvements we deserve. Their primary duties and responsibilities are:

- To be the representative of the union on the picket line.
- To be the leader of the picket line – inspiring picketers, solving problems, listening, answering questions, speaking with visitors.
- To be the link between the Union and the picket line.
- To be the media liaison (direct them to the union spokesperson.)
- To be the liaison with police, security guards and picket line monitors.

If you are interested in this position, please contact Scott at president@cupe3913.on.ca

CUPE3913 ELECTION



Thank you to our members that have run in the election. All positions that were applied for were acclaimed.

We still have many positions open in our union that still need to be filled! If you are interested in getting involved with the union and its members, please contact president@cupe3913.on.ca to hear more about opportunities to get involved in the union!

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What's going on

UNIT 1 REMINDERS

As we are approaching mid-term season, we would like to remind Unit 1 members to be mindful in tracking their hours to prevent overwork. In the case you are over your hours, please report this to your supervisor. If at any point there are any issues, please contact our Unit 1 Steward, Kathleen Nolan at unit1@cupe3913.on.ca



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What's going on

LABOUR AND US: STUDENT LED WORKSHOP SERIES

Join four PhD students, through five workshops this March, culminating in a performance in April 2024. Open to all, especially student workers and those interested in worker solidarity, no prior experience required!

- Explore themes of worker's theatre, union solidarity, and the experiences of student workers.
- Engage in multiple roles, from creative contributions to behind-the-scenes support.
- Your input is crucial - help tailor the workshops to address the issues that matter to your community!

Fill out the form to stay connected and give feedback by clicking the link or scanning the QR code <https://forms.office.com/r/x4FaAYFxy3>



Supported by the International Institute for Critical Studies in Improvisation, CUPE 3913, and the Experiential Learning Fund

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What's going on

BENEFITS PROCESSING

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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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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CUPE3913 BARGAINING TIMELINE



CUPE3913 wants to note that the university is moving at a glacial pace in responding to proposals. We wanted to present our monetary proposals before W24, however the university has been very slow in responding.

Collective bargaining: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/collective-bargaining>

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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**.

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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Learn more about...

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

Though this doesn't speak to the unique needs of being a worker and graduate student at UofG, there are some general mental health supports that might be helpful.

The Wellness Education & Promotion Centre is offering Mental Health First Aid on campus on **Friday, March 22nd and Thursday, May 9th**. This training is offered for free and open to all University of Guelph students, staff and faculty, however staff and faculty will be given priority as spaces are limited.

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is offered to someone with an emerging mental health or substance use problem or in crisis, until appropriate treatment is found or the situation resolves. An evidence-based course, MHFA Standard has been proven to give participants:

- the tools to recognize signs of decline in mental well-being.
- the ability to talk about their mental health.
- the knowledge to discuss professional and other supports that could help with recovery or improved mental well-being.
- the confidence to reach out to these supports.
- the tools to assist during a mental health or substance use crisis, and
- the knowledge to use MHFA actions to maintain one's own mental wellness.

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Learn more about...

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

The training will consist of two parts:

- An online training module to be completed on your own before the training day (approximately 2 hours)
- A 1-day, in-person training on Friday, March 22nd or Thursday, May 9th from 9:00am-4:30pm (lunch is provided)

Registration for both dates is now available on a first come, first served basis.

- Register for March 22nd before March 8th
- Register for May 9th before April 25th

If you are interested in Mental Health First Aid but are unable to participate in this training session, please email mentalhealth.training@uoguelph.ca to be informed about future opportunities.

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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

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 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

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