

CUPE 3913

Teaching Assistants and Sessional Lecturers at the University of Guelph

30 years of actually improving life



NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2026

FEATURED TOPICS

What's going on?

- **Announcements:**

- We are looking for college and department stewards
- January 21 Tabling
- Benefits & Claims Announcement
- Winter Membership Meeting
- We're Hiring an Elections Officer
- Environmental Racism Workshop

- **Reminders**

- Support for Teaching assistants and sessional lecturers
- Reminder to Unit 1 Members
- Hiring questions?
- RBC PayEdge
- Please provide an alternative email address in our members portal
- 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/\$1300 (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

WE ARE LOOKING FOR

COLLEGE & DEPARTMENT STEWARDS!

We are looking for people who are able to work with a team and are passionate about making UofG a better place for TAs and Sessionals.

AVAILABLE POSITIONS LISTED BELOW!

These positions come with semesterly honoraria of \$100 for department stewards and \$200 for college stewards. The time commitment is a few hours per month.



ONTARIO VETERINARY COLLEGE

OVC College Steward

Department of Biomedical Sciences
Department of Clinical Studies
Department of Pathobiology
Department of Population Medicine

LANG SCHOOL OF BUSINESS:

Department of Economics/Finance
Department of Hospitality & Tourism
Executive Programs

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL AND APPLIED HUMAN SCIENCES

Geography
Political Science
Sociology and Anthropology
Collaborative International Development Studies

UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH-HUMBER:

Early Childhood Studies
Family and Community Social Services
Justice Studies
Liberal Studies
Psychology

ONTARIO AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

Food Agricultural Resource Economics
Food Science
Animal Science
School of Environmental Design and Rural Development

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING:

Civil, Environmental, and Water Resources Engineering
Electrical and Computer Engineering
Interdisciplinary Engineering
Mechanical Engineering

COLLEGE OF COMPUTATIONAL, MATHEMATICAL, AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES:

Department of Chemistry
School of Computer Science
Department of Mathematics and Statistics
Department of Physics

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED, PLEASE CONTACT: president@cupe3913.on.ca

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What's going on: Announcements

JANUARY 21 TABLING

Swing by our winter tabling in the University Centre on Wednesday, January 21, from 10 AM–2 PM. We'd love to see you there!

W26 Tabling

Wed. Jan. 21
10 AM to 2 PM
University Centre



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What's going on: Announcements

BENEFITS & CLAIMS ANNOUNCEMENT



Hi everyone,

As you may know, we have been experiencing issues with our current benefits software provider since September of last year. We are currently in a process of transition to a new benefits software provider. We are looking at late February as a general 'go live' range for the new system. We will keep you update on our progress. In the meantime, we are asking members to hold off on submitting non-urgent claims until then, if you can.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at president@cupe3913.on.ca.

Cheers,

Scott Duchesne, President

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What's going on: Announcements

WINTER MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The CUPE 2913 Winter 2026 Membership Meeting is scheduled for January 29, 7:30 PM at the Bullring. In-person attendance and light food will be available, but is limited to 50 people. Please RSVP using the QR code below. Details on how to attend virtually will be provided closer to the meeting. At the meeting, we will be covering committee reports, election updates, and have important votes on bylaws and our bargaining budget. We're excited to see you there!

WINTER MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Join us for our Winter 2026
Membership Meeting. RSVP for in-
person attendance.

When: Thursday, January 29, 7:30 PM
Where: The Bullring



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What's going on: Announcements

WE'RE HIRING AN ELECTIONS OFFICER

We're looking for an Elections Officer, who will assist in overseeing the union election process from late January to late March. You must be a current member (had a work assignment in Winter 2025 or later), and must be (or become) a Member in Good Standing. A small honorarium is included.

If interested, contact Scott Duchesne at president@cupe3913.on.ca by January 22nd.



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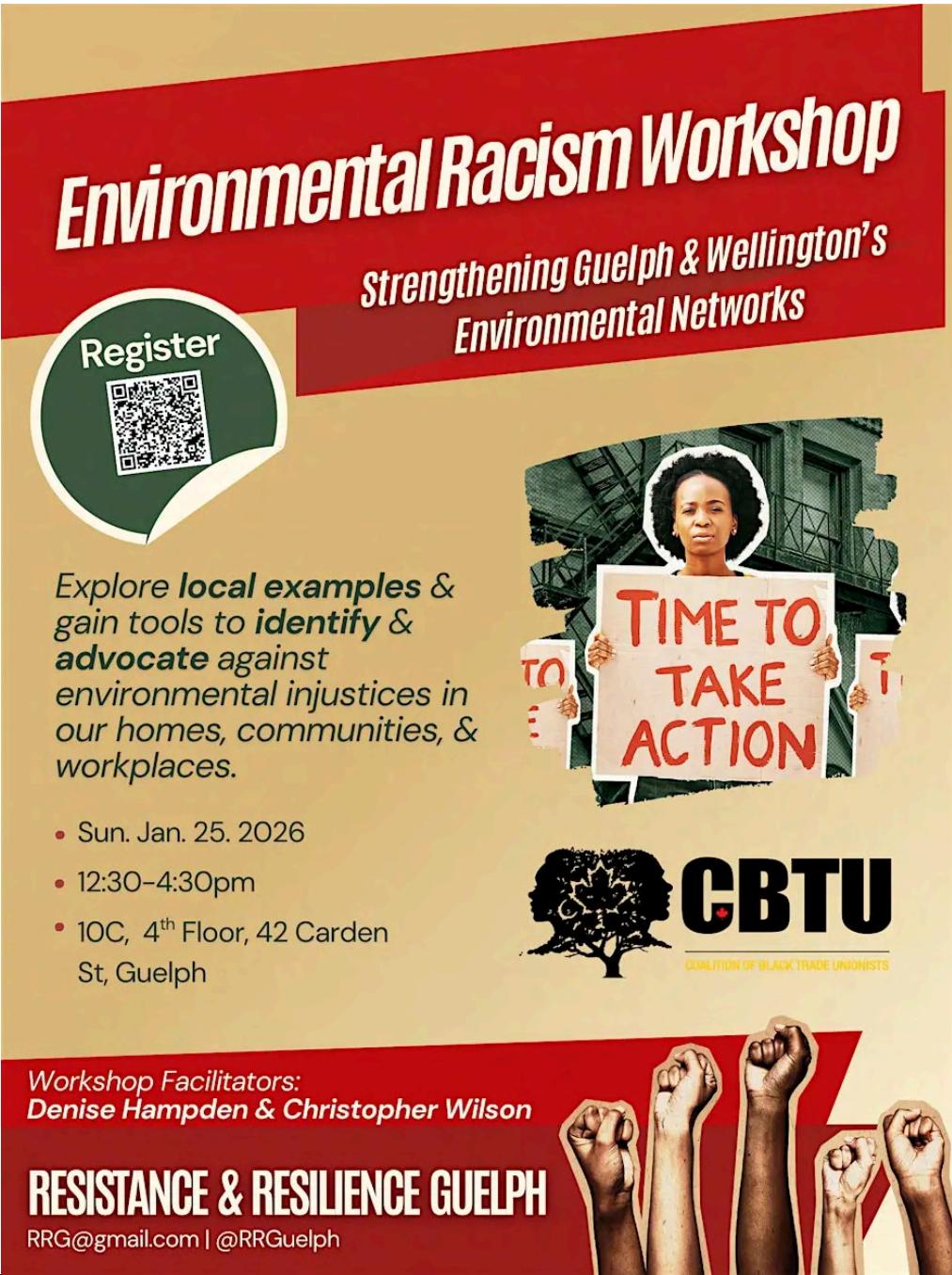
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What's going on: Announcements

ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM WORKSHOP

Register through EventBrite

(<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/environmental-racism-workshop-tickets-1979933087162?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>) to attend this workshop on environmental racism that links climate and environmental issues to lived experience, using local examples to help you recognize and challenge injustices in your homes, communities, and workplaces.



The poster for the Environmental Racism Workshop is primarily red and yellow. At the top, the title 'Environmental Racism Workshop' is written in a large, white, serif font. Below it, the subtitle 'Strengthening Guelph & Wellington's Environmental Networks' is displayed in a smaller, italicized, white font. On the left side, there is a green circular button with the word 'Register' and a QR code. In the center, a woman of color is shown holding a protest sign that reads 'TIME TO TAKE ACTION'. The sign is partially torn. Below the sign, the logo for 'CBTU' (Coalition of Black Trade Unionists) is displayed, featuring a stylized tree and the acronym in bold black letters. At the bottom, the text 'Workshop Facilitators: Denise Hampden & Christopher Wilson' is listed, along with the email 'RRG@gmail.com | @RRGuelph'. The bottom right corner features a graphic of several raised fists of different skin tones.

Environmental Racism Workshop

Strengthening Guelph & Wellington's Environmental Networks

Register

Explore local examples & gain tools to identify & advocate against environmental injustices in our homes, communities, & workplaces.

- Sun. Jan. 25. 2026
- 12:30-4:30pm
- 10C, 4th Floor, 42 Carden St, Guelph

Workshop Facilitators:
Denise Hampden & Christopher Wilson

RESISTANCE & RESILIENCE GUELPH

RRG@gmail.com | @RRGuelph

CBTU
COALITION OF BLACK TRADE UNIONISTS

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What's going on: Reminders

SUPPORT FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS AND SESSIONAL LECTURERS

The events in December at the University of Oklahoma highlight how quickly academic workers can be put in vulnerable positions when student concerns escalate. We recognize that sessionals and TAs, especially those from equity-deserving communities, face heightened scrutiny and disproportionate consequences in such situations. We understand how anxiety-inducing such news can be. We wish to remind you that you are not alone! CUPE 3913 stands in solidarity with all our members.

Our grievance and equity committees are ever-ready to help members navigate politically, socially or academically charged situations. If you face biases, discrimination or feel unsafe or vulnerable in your role, we are here to chat or provide support and resources necessary for you.

Best,
Equity Committee

Please feel free to reach out to us (equity@cupe3913.on.ca) or a caucus chair of a community you identify with if you are in need of support.

Queer Caucus: queercaucus@cupe3913.on.ca

Women's Caucus: women@cupe3913.on.ca

Black Caucus: blackcaucus@cupe3913.on.ca

International Caucus: international@cupe3913.on.ca

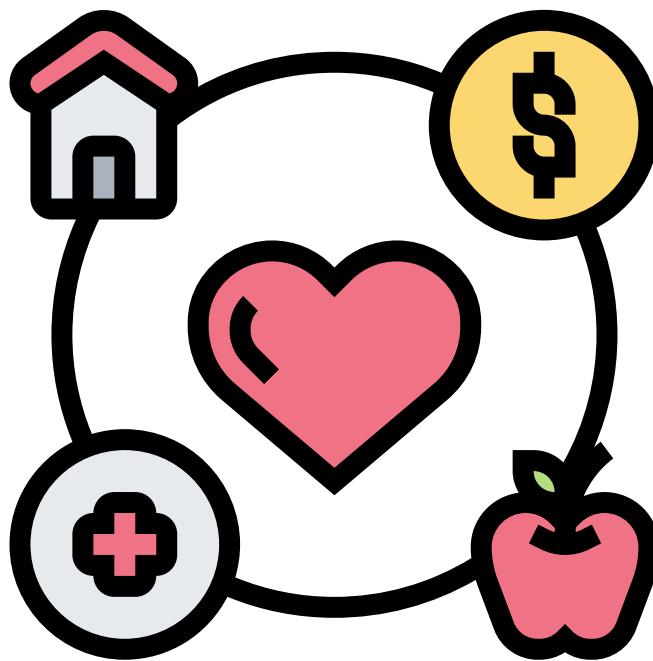
Disabilities Caucus: disabilitiescaucus@cupe3913.on.ca

What's going on: Reminders —

REMINDER TO UNIT 1 MEMBERS RE: BENEFITS

Are you a Unit 1 member planning to submit a claim for health benefits? If so, please read this important reminder.

Unit 1 members need to first submit their claims to their primary insurance provider (which is usually the GSA benefits plan).



Once assessed they can **then make a claim with CUPE** for the uncovered amount.

The Explanation of Benefits needs to be submitted along with their claim documents.

What's going on: Reminders —

HIRING QUESTIONS?

DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT HIRING?

Do you feel like the **hiring policies weren't followed**, or someone with **less experience** or **who didn't meet the qualifications** was **hired over you**?

Hiring questions are time sensitive and must be dealt with ASAP!

Please contact our labour relations coordinator, Jeff, to ask questions.

DO NOT WAIT!

You can reach Jeff at
labourrelations@cupe3913.on.ca

What's going on: Reminders —

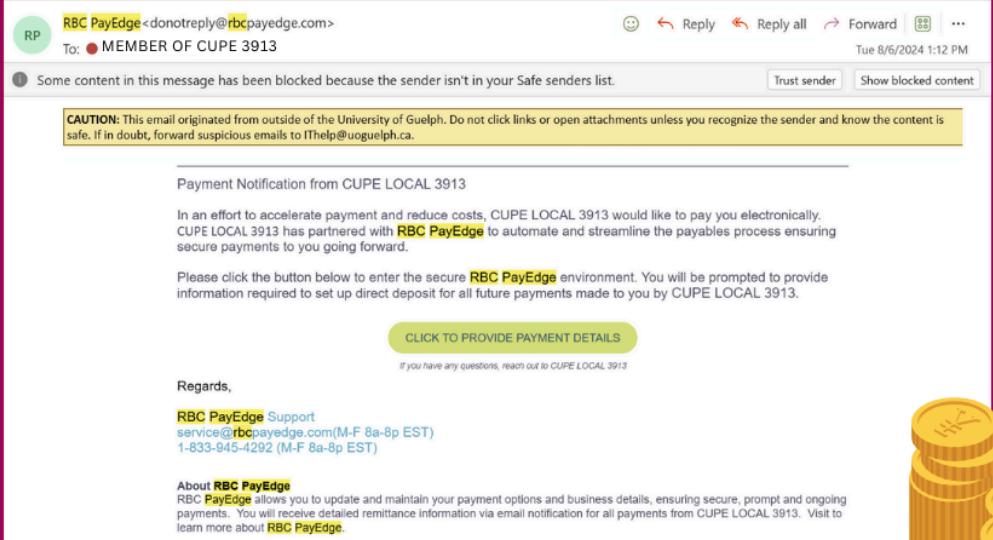
RBC PAYEDGE

RBC PAYEDGE

CUPE 3913 manages direct deposit through RBC PayEdge. If you file a claim with us, you will receive an email like the one below.

This email is legitimate. You are required to click the link in order to input your information to receive your payment.

We have heard from many members inquiring about the legitimacy of these emails, so we are putting out this statement to advise all members that these emails are indeed coming from us.



We would like to remind members that as of Fall 2024, CUPE 3913 is now paying out benefits claims through direct deposit. To register, you need to input your information to RBC PayEdge when prompted. If you receive the above email, **it is legitimate.**

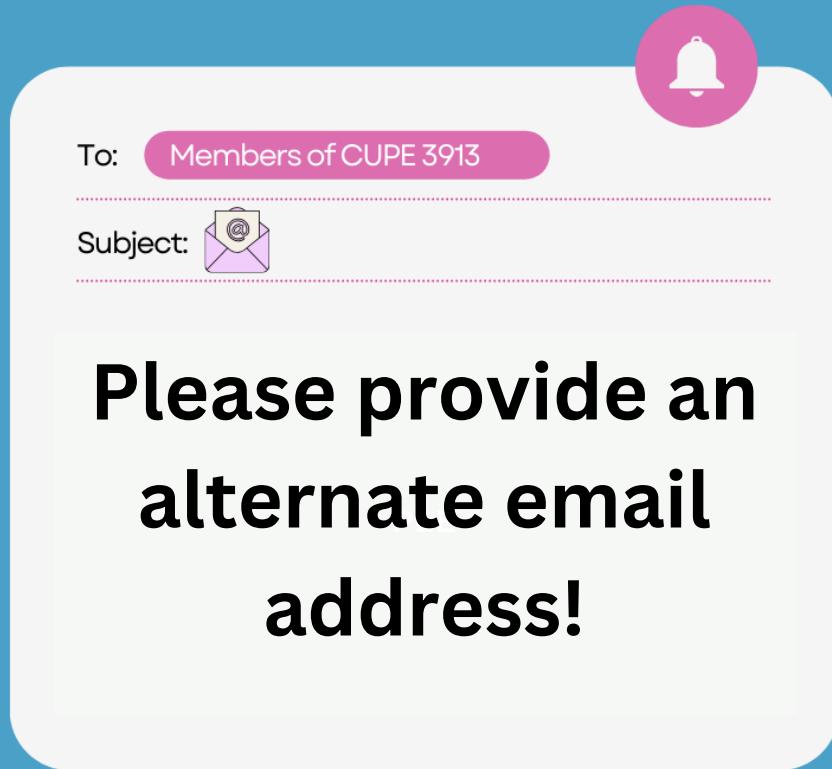
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What's going on: Reminders

PLEASE PROVIDE AN ALTERNATE EMAIL ADDRESS IN OUR MEMBERS' PORTAL!



We are updating our membership data and would like to have an alternate method to contact members.

We are asking members to provide an alternate, **non-UofG email address** in our members portal so that we can continue to contact you in case we lose access to UofG's system. Please input alternate email addresses in your account at cupe3913.on.ca. Thanks!

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What's going on: Reminders —

TRACK YOUR HOURS!



reminders!



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 2025 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): UNIT 2 (Sessional Lecturers):

- \$600 total for vision, prescription, and mental health claims
- Any expense under the Income Tax Act 118.2(2) up to \$1300, 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?



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.

Partner code: 1E716

www.fordpartner.com

What about the Financial Assistance Fund (FAF)?

Formerly, Unit 1 members (TAs) experiencing financial hardships could apply for up to \$500 in financial assistance per academic year.

Unfortunately, due to the University's failure to pay members in a timely manner in the F24 semester, the FAF has been exhausted for the duration of the academic year. CUPE 3913 has filed a grievance with the university to recoup some of this money, but unfortunately this is a time-consuming process, and we don't expect this fund to be available again until September 2025. Discussions are ongoing with the university to resolve this issue.

HAVING MONEY PROBLEMS?



Take advantage of CUPE 3913's discounts

Discounts on Online Psychotherapy Services

Offered by Dr. Ana Bahamonde, Psy.D., in both Spanish and English. Dr. Bahamonde is registered with the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO) and provides individual therapy using a client-centered, goal-oriented approach.

Additional information on therapy types, resources, Dr. Bahamonde's professional background, and therapeutic approach can be found at <https://br2heal.ca/>. Services also include **coaching, career counselling, and clinical supervision for psychotherapists** — offerings that may be of particular interest to CUPE members.

CUPE members are eligible for a 15% discount on their first three sessions by indicating the coupon BR2HEAL-CUPE3913 during the initial assessment or first session.

If you have any questions, contact Dr. Bahamonde directly at br2heal.ca@gmail.com or (647) 629 1751.



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



Support Resources for Graduate Students

The University of Guelph Graduate Student Association has partnered with several new service providers and wellness partners to host wellness events and workshops:

<https://gsaguelph.ca/wellness-events-and-workshops/>

Tara and Melissa of MintOT are occupational therapists, supporting graduate students in functioning and thriving. They also run small support groups and large group sessions.

To learn more, or sign up for a workshop, visit the GSA's wellness events and workshops page.



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND STAFF CONTACT

Executive

President

Scott Duchesne

Vice-President Internal

Amanda Wuth

Vice-President External

Grace Goderre

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