

News from NowHere

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Bargaining Report

Our collective agreement expired on August 31, 2010. Provisions remain in effect until the ratification of a new collective agreement. Bargaining for this new agreement has commenced. Our committee has now met with the employer on November 19 and 20. Further sessions are scheduled for November 22 and 30 and December 13.

Team members participating in sessions to date have been Sharleen Rayner (CUPE National), Clayton Beish, Gail Osachoff, Heather Wagg, Ron Williams and Wendy Wilson. We have agreed with the employer's team to keep our discussions confidential at this time. It is reasonable to say, however, that though just getting started, we are moving rapidly so far. Copies of the proposals that members ratified last summer will again be available at the Annual General Meeting. ●



Regular Sessional Budget

Eliminated in Arts and Sciences

The following commentary focuses on the Humanities and Fine Arts Division, but the funding changes described will occur throughout the College of Arts and Science.

At the Humanities Division Meeting planned for 1:30 p.m., November 24, 2010, Vice-Dean Parkinson hopes to present a report outlining some possible strategies for recuperating some of the funding for courses offered on a sessional basis.

Summary

In his Report to the Divisional Faculty Council, Vice-Dean Parkinson calls for permanent structural changes to the Division. If implemented, these changes will drastically affect the Division's view of and relationship to sessional lecturers.

The Vice-Dean specifically addresses the role of Sessional Lecturers. He says that they have played a much-appreciated role in the education of students and an insufficiently appreciated role in the support of other key functions.

Sessional Budget continued on page 2

In this issue:

Bargaining Report—page 1

Budget Elimination and Commentary—page 2

Faculty Academic Program Appointments—page 3

Call for Committee Nominations—page 4

Reminders—page 5

SFL Convention Report—page 8

Information Download—page 9

Agenda for AGM, December 10—page 10

He also notes that overall reductions in Sessional contracts are likely. He establishes a time line for these reductions:

In 2011-12, Sessional contracts will be lost as Sessional funds increasingly shift from base-budget allocations to fall-in grants for sabbaticals.

In 2012-13, there will be a further reduction of base-budget allocations for Sessional positions. More Sessional contracts will be lost, though perhaps less than could be expected if an Innovation Fund is established. Sessionals paid from this proposed fund would be filling in for professors who have successfully accessed this fund. In 2013-14 there will no longer be base-fund allocations for Sessionals. Funds for sessional contracts would come from fall-in sabbatical grants and grants from the proposed Innovation Fund.

Commentary: Impact on Sessionals

Sessionals have been called “temporary” workers on paper, even though in practice, many of these people have taught the same classes for years, even decades. Now, Sessional work would no longer be considered “temporary”—sessional work would become increasingly casual. What little job security sessionals currently enjoy will be lost. Sessionals will no longer be able to anticipate which classes—if any—might be on offer. Qualifying for Right of First Refusal would become increasingly difficult. If classes on offer to Sessionals rely on sabbaticals and grants, most would not be offered in consecutive years. In order to obtain Right of First Refusal on a class, a sessional must teach this class at least three times in four years.

Sessionals having Master’s Degrees rather than doctorates will be especially vulnerable. Currently, many departments do not allow Sessionals without a doctorate to teach upper year courses. If Sessionals become nothing more than replacements for professors on leave, then many will no longer be eligible to apply for these contracts.

Commentary: Impact on Division

Vice-Dean Parkinson mentions the need to increase the number of undergraduate majors and graduate students. Undergraduate majors come from a strong pool of undergraduate students. Cutting Sessional contracts will result in reducing the number of first-year classes and increasing the number of students in these classes. Neither move is likely to attract undergraduate majors. Fewer classes mean fewer students from which to produce majors. Larger classes will mean less individual contact between instructor and student and, hence, less informal mentoring and encouragement. Enrolment in the College is already down. This plan will be unlikely to reverse that trend.



Finding qualified persons willing to accept casual employment could be difficult. Relying on “community based sessional faculty” may be possible for professional colleges, but obtaining such people for classes in the Humanities will be more difficult.

Graduate students might fill the void, but expecting graduate students to teach while they are getting their degrees will not enhance the attractiveness of our graduate programs. Experience has shown that teaching more than a few classes in a professor’s course will add considerably to the length of time it takes a graduate student to complete a degree.



Faculty "Academic Program Appointments"

The recently concluded University of Saskatchewan Faculty Association collective agreement includes a provision to establish the new faculty classification of "Academic Program Appointment." As we reported in October, these appointments are tenure stream but with an emphasis on teaching. The highest rank available to employees in these positions is Associate Professor. They continue to include a research component, but focused on pedagogy.

One prime mover in developing the classification has been the Edwards School of Business, who may envisage hiring professionals from outside the academic sector. A maximum of fifty such appointments would be allowed, but without increase to the faculty complement. In other words, such appointments would not be in addition to any vacancies which occur in the normal course of operations.

Nothing more is known yet about how the appointments will come into existence. The Provost and Deans are consulting about how the provision will be implemented. CUPE 3287 has a vested interest in following this discussion closely. Although the positions are thus far defined as not purely teaching positions, we believe that further ongoing discussion with our Union is mandated by a Memorandum of Tentative Agreement which concluded the last round of negotiations. Item #7 of this agreement states that:

The Employer agrees that in the event of the introduction of a teaching stream in the USFA collective agreement, the Employer will immediately schedule a Joint Union Management Committee Meeting to review the application of Article 21.01 (Technological Change and the Transfer of Work).

American Income Life Insurance

All members are receiving an updated letter from American Income Life Insurance. CUPE 3287 has an agreement with AIL. They now provide all members with \$3,500 of free insurance covering accidental death, in return for which the Union distributes their letter requesting that you submit your registration form and allow a representative to visit you to discuss purchase of further insurance.

During the life of our first contract with AIL, a few difficulties in communication surfaced. These difficulties seem not to be ongoing. AIL representatives, themselves unionized, are instructed not to use pressure tactics when approaching potential clients.

Know that you have no obligation to return the registration card, but are nonetheless covered by the now increased amount of insurance. If you return the card and a representative does visit you, you are eligible for AIL's complimentary eye care discount and child safety package.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact either the Union or the AIL Public Relations Officer, Ken Winton-Grey, at 221-9701. ●

REMEMBER:

You can access union resources online:

- ***Frequently Asked Questions***
- ***Online Collective Agreement***
- ***Downloadable newsletters***



<http://3287.cupe.ca>

Committees, Committees: HELP!

1. The Planning and Priorities Committee of University Council still is without a Sessional representative for the 2010-2011 academic year. This is THE Ur-Committee to end all committees. The committee meets every other Wednesday around noon. An honorarium of \$50 per meeting is provided. If interested, please contact the University Secretary's office.
2. U of S Occupational Health Committee oversees the handling of all health and safety issues at the U of S. This committee meets four times a year. In addition, members are encouraged to sit in on two local site committees and assist with inspections. This is a great learning opportunity for anyone interested in how to make the largest workplace in Saskatoon also the safest one. The Sessionals' Union needs a new rep.
3. The College of Arts and Science has just approved its first ever by-laws. Changes in structure will be implemented almost immediately and there will be more Sessional representation than in the past. Here's who Sessionals will have on Arts and Science Committees:
 - (a) Each of the three divisions, Science, Social Science, and Humanities and Fine Arts, will have its own Academic Programs Committee including a Sessional representative.
 - (b) In addition, there will be a Sessional on the new Academic Programs Coordinating Committee which will facilitate program discussions among the divisions.
 - (c) There will continue to be a Sessional on the Academic Affairs Committee.
 - (d) A task force is reviewing the two equity committees in Arts and Science. If the College determines a committee is the best structure to raise equity issues, Sessionals would likely

have representation there also, as in the past.

- (e) Sessional representatives on College committees serve as voting members of the overall College Faculty Council as well.

The deadline for nominations to the new committees will likely be the end of January, 2011. Even those already serving on a committee which remains in place will need to indicate their willingness to continue under the new by-laws.

4. An alternate sessional representative is needed on the U of S Employee Assistance Plan board. This is an ideal learning experience for anyone interested in workplace counseling issues.



Famous Penultimate Words

Human history becomes more and more a race becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe.

— *H. G. Wells*

Happy the people whose history is boring to read.

— *Montesquieu*

History is an account, mostly false, of events, mostly unimportant, which are brought about by rules, mostly knaves, and soldiers, mostly fools.

— *Ambrose Bierce*

I must have a prodigious quantity of mind. It takes me as much as a week, sometimes, to make it up.

— *Mark Twain*

If you empty your purse into your head, no one can ever take it from you.

— *Benjamin Franklin*

The difference between literature and journalism is that literature is unread and journalism is unreadable.

— *Oscar Wilde*



Reminders

Postings (Advertising of Courses Available): Postings can be viewed on the Human Resources website under "Employment Opportunities." They remain officially open for only one week, a good reason to file an early application. (See below.) The application form is available at http://www.usask.ca/hrd/forms/docs/sessional_current_competitions.pdf or contact the Union Office for a paper copy.

Postings for Spring and Summer Session 2011 will occur on February 2, March 2, April 6 and subsequently.

Postings for Regular Session 2011-2012 will begin on May 18, 2011.

Please note: The posting schedule is currently under negotiation and could change when a new collective agreement is concluded.

Early Applications: "Early" applications can be made for Spring and Summer starting the first week in February and for Regular Session 2011 starting the third week in May. An early application ensures that you will not miss out if you forget to track the actual postings. Submit a written application to your department, keep a copy and send the Union a copy. The early application form is available at <http://www.usask.ca/hrd/forms/docs/>



[sessional_early_application_form.pdf](#) or contact the Union Office for a paper copy.

Professional Development Fund: Applications can be made for conference participation, funding for research projects, graduate studies and more. The Professional Development Fund receives a total allotment of \$30,000 per year. The next open period will be March 1-15, 2011. The application form is available on line at: http://www.usask.ca/hrd/docs/Application_for_APPDF.doc. If convenient, please send a copy of the application to the Union Office. Under the new rules, the deadline for using the funds is one year from receiving the allocation. **You may submit a retroactive claim for expenses incurred on the project during the period of up to six months before the application period, but funding is not guaranteed until the grant is made.**

Right of First Refusal: A Sessional having taught the same course three times in the space of four years is usually eligible to request Right of First Refusal. Right of First Refusal means that the applicant will be hired when the course is posted on a Sessional basis (unless another applicant has Right of First Refusal and more priority). (Article 14.01 in the collective agreement). Application for ROFR should be submitted to the office of the Dean of the College responsible for the course. For an application form to download, go to: <http://www.usask.ca/hrd/forms/recruitment.php>. Please send a copy of the application to the Union so that we can check that you receive a timely response.

For clarification and more info, contact the Union Office.

Tuition Waiver Fund: You may apply for up to one 3 credit unit course waiver per year. Try to apply at least one month before the start of the course. Contact Union Office for the form or download at: http://www.usask.ca/hrd/docs/cupe3287_tuition_waiver_fund.pdf. **The fund allows for 20 waivers per year, but the maximum fund balance is the equivalent of 40 waivers for 3 credit unit courses. At that point, we lose what we don't use. Spread the word.**

Health Spending Account: To qualify for the \$500 per annum Health Spending Account, the Sessional must first teach 12 c.u. within a 12 month period. Notification of eligibility should be automatic. The plan document may be consulted at http://www.usask.ca/hrd/benefits/employee_groups/sessionals_in_scope/Sessional_Health_Spending_Account.pdf. Click on Health Spending Account. If you think you qualify, but have not received notification, please contact the Union Office. The claim form is available from the list at <http://www.usask.ca/hrd/benefits/forms.php> or from the Union Office. **Choose the "Health Spending Account" form, not a Benefits**



Plan form. You will need to pay your qualifying health expense and file for reimbursement. If, for example, a dental office attempts to file for you, they may be using a benefits plan form which will not work. Make sure that the names of any qualifying dependents appear on your Health Spending Card. If they do not, contact the Benefits Office. The employer may be unaware that you have a family.

Health Spending Account Rules

Those who qualify for the Health Spending Account, please note that you have access to the account when you are not on payroll as well as when you are on payroll. It appears that there were some miscommunications with Human Resources or Blue Cross last summer regarding the status of the Health Spending Account of Sessionals not currently teaching. If you believe you were prevented from filing a claim simply because you were not teaching at the time, please contact the union. If you filed a claim which you believe was denied because you were not teaching at the time, please contact the union. Human Resources is also attempting to check for any claims filed that were mistakenly denied.

Pension: The plan has been replaced since May 2007 by a Retirement Savings amount of 6% of salary paid by the employer, described on the pay cheque stub as "Sessional savings." The enrolment requirements remain the same (35% of YMPE in each of two consecutive calendar years). All the qualifying employment must be in scope of CUPE 3287.



Parking: For time-share parking during the Regular Session, please call Donna Boots, our parking officer, at 249-2558 or dh4boots@sasktel.net. Fees are pro-rated. Please be prepared to pay with a cheque. The Union does not generally make money on parking. The Union (your colleague, the Sessional Parking Officer,) assumes the tedious responsibility for divvying up the time-share parking because the University does not want to do so. The University bills the Union for the parking stalls. University parking rates will increase substantially as of January 1, 2011 as a result of the Faculty's no longer controlling them. It is expected that the employer will announce the amount of the increase in early December. Please check their webpage under parking.



Salary levels: Members who have taught more than 10 x 3 credit units should be paid at level 2 rates; those who have taught more than 20 x 3 credit units should be paid at level 3 rates. Adjustments should be made automatically by the employer. As of September 1, 2009, salaries for 3 c. u. increased to:

Level 1: \$5,455.50

Level 2: \$5,680.50

Level 3: \$5,905.50

Courses taught while on regular Faculty or while on an ASPA contract, **including as facilitator for an online course**, should count in your progression through the levels, but it may be necessary for you to inform Human Resources of this part of your teaching experience. If there is any uncertainty, please check with the Union Office.

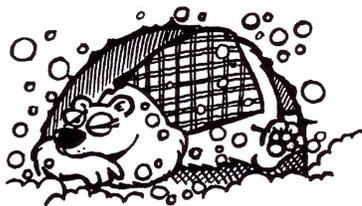


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Employee Assistance Program:

The EAP provides you with access to confidential counseling services 24 hours a day, seven days a week, at no cost to you. Find more information about their services and contact information at: <http://www.usask.ca/eap/> Unemployed Sessionals should still be able to access help, but it might be easier to call the on-campus number, 966-2766, rather than attempting contact through the website.

CUPE 3287 Good and Welfare Committee: The union committee can provide modest assistance to members in severe financial crisis. Contact the Union Office and ask to be referred to Michael Kennedy, the chair of the committee.



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ATTENTION NON TEACHING MEMBERS: DON'T GET LOST. The Right of First Refusal expires if the course is not taught within twenty-four months of the September following the end of the last contract. The following provisions are important this year after the cuts to sessional funding of the past three years.

1. An **extension** may be requested on several grounds, including if the course was not available on a sessional basis. See Article 14.06 of the collective agreement, pp. 17-18.
2. If the Right of First Refusal has already expired, **reinstatement** may still be requested. In this case, the applicant goes to the bottom of the Right of First Refusal list until reinstated. If not reinstated automatically, the applicant must be allowed to teach the course once when it is available and be assessed. See article 14.07, p.18.

Forms for Extension or Reinstatement of Right of First Refusal are available online at: http://www.usask.ca/hrd/docs/rofr_extension_request.doc and http://www.usask.ca/hrd/docs/rofr_reinstatement_request.doc.

CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS

When you move house, please:

1. Let the Union know directly by calling or emailing.
2. When changing your address with the University, the safest plan is to:
 - (a) Change it online through PAWS. Thus changed, the correct address will circulate automatically to Payroll, Human Resources and the College.
 - (b) However, the Department will not know till their next check in with the Administration information system, so inform your Department directly.

Saskatchewan Federation of Labour Convention

Report by Gail Gosachoff

About 970 delegates gathered in Regina for the 55th annual SFL convention at the end of October, the largest one I've attended. The larger number of delegates was a result of the heightened interest that came with the contest for president. Larry Hubich, from the Grain Services Union and SFL President for eight years, was challenged by Tom Graham, CUPE President for 13 years. Hubich received 59% of the vote and Graham did well at 41%.

Dozens of resolutions were passed concerning child care, health care, education and so on, but what surprised me was the passion invested in the debate on gun registration.

Other things I learned at the convention:

- The Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission has been reduced to 1.25 employees and is in danger of being completely dismantled.
- With the possible sale of Potash Corp to BHP Billiton from Australia, we were interested to hear that Sudbury has had only bad results from the sale of Inco (nickel mining) to a giant Brazilian company.
- The Canadian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC), union busters posing as a union, are in our province because they were invited by the SaskParty government.
- Two workers in B.C. reported in detail about how highway construction and maintenance have been privatized in their province and warned about a similar trend in Saskatchewan.
- Perhaps there are individuals and groups are people who are even worse off than we are: there were at least five financial appeals for people and union locals in dire need.
- The "no sand" policy of the municipal government in Regina made walking and driving almost impossible.

Report by Wendy Wilson

One of the things I found most interesting and impressive about the convention was the number of issues that the various unions belonging to the federation are associated with – everything from issues of sexism, heterosexism, racism, ableism, health care, education, privatization of public services, the erosion of crown corporations, environmental issues – all these issues and more were addressed in one way or another over the course of the convention. Although I know, objectively, that unions deal with numerous issues of equity, it felt good, subjectively, to see this "live", so to speak.

This always reminds me that unions are a public good even though they are often presented as a problem by the media and political elites. This was the foundation of the presentation given by the keynote speaker at the Convention. George Lakoff, a professor of Cognitive Science and Linguistics at the University of California, looked at issues of framing and linguistics and how we can promote progressive ideas in a more effective way so that the public, and indeed many union members themselves, are provided with more accurate representations of unions and unionization.

Conservative political bodies, especially in the US, tend to be far better at framing their ideas so that they appear to be beneficial to people even when they are, clearly going to be detrimental to people's wellbeing. Progressive political bodies need to catch up; it isn't good enough to be 'right' in the ideological position one takes. It is necessary to persuade people that this position is the correct one.

Despite human beings being rational, reason alone does not seem to be sufficient to influence people's understanding of "right" and "wrong", "just" and "unjust".

I found his talk particularly interesting as I teach some of his material about cognitive reasoning in my sociology courses. I won't go into the science here but have included some websites you can look at if you are interested in his ideas about how to frame material so it resonates positively with people.

Convention Report continued on page 9

Convention Report continued from page 8

I should also indicate that I certainly question some of the science; nevertheless, there is a great deal of evidence to indicate that there much validity in the views he expresses.

The Myth of the Political Moderate - George Lakoff

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BaFM9CvWm-g>

Idea Framing, Metaphors, and Your Brain - George Lakoff

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S_CWBjyIERY

Linguist George Lakoff on Rationality and Politics

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UqFxHTh98Ww>

Information Download: All the News That's Fit to Print

This link comes to us from Bryan Wiebe who teaches for the Philosophy Department as a Sessional Lecturer. Given the corporate model that the University of Saskatchewan has adopted and that Humanities and Social Science disciplines tend to struggle in this kind of economic model, it is a very timely piece. It also rather heartening to see the respect for Humanities and Social Sciences expressed here:

<http://genomebiology.com/2010/11/10/138>

One extract: "Perhaps my own background will interest you. I started out as a classics major. I'm now Professor of Biochemistry and Chemistry [at Brandeis]. Of all the courses I took in college and graduate school, the ones that have benefited me the most in my career as a scientist are the courses in classics, art history, sociology, and English literature. These courses didn't just give me a much better appreciation for my own culture; they taught me how to think, to analyze, and to write clearly. None of my sciences courses did any of that."

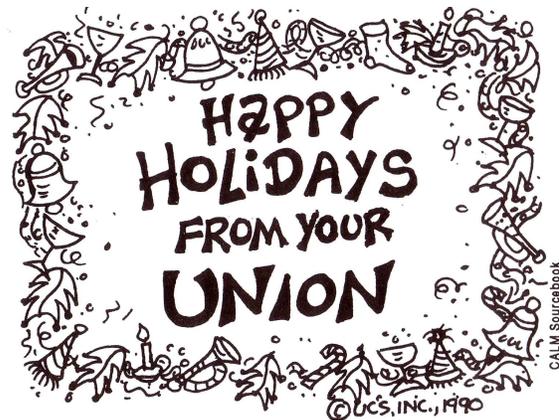
This article is, as is fairly clear, about racism in Canadian academic environments:

<http://www.universityaffairs.ca/racism-in-the-academy.aspx>

Sociologist Peter Li's path from graduate student to fellow of the Royal Society of Canada started with questions about his ability to speak English because of his last name. Patricia Monture, a tenured professor with two law

degrees, often faced incredulity about her status on campus when meeting a staff or faculty member for the first time because she is aboriginal. Malinda Smith, when newly hired in political science, was often mistaken for a phys-ed teacher at the University, the assumption based on a single visual characteristic: she was a black scholar in a land of white ones.

This is what racism has looked like in the Canadian academy. The view rarely includes vandalism or hostile comments, although these have occurred on campuses in the last decade. Rather, scholars call this subtler version "structural racism" or "denial of opportunity" for racialized scholars, referring to those who aren't Caucasian. ●



A Note regarding Decline of Spring and Summer Session

In October we reported that Quarter 3 of the summer showed a course reduction of 10-15% from 2009, based on dues comparison. It appears that the overall decrease in summer courses between 2009 and 2010 is very significant, bordering on 35%, based on three credit unit equivalents taught by sessionals. More information will be forthcoming for the Annual General Meeting. Any input from members with experience of the past two summers would be greatly appreciated.

Saskatchewan Federation of Labour's "Labour Issues Campaign"

Delegates to the October, 2010 Saskatchewan Federation of Labour Convention have brought back a request, passed by a convention resolution, that all affiliates dedicate \$3 per member to a one-time donation to their Labour Issues Campaign. At 250 or less working members in December 2010, our Union would pay a maximum of \$750. This campaign has lobbied, for example, against cuts to public health care, cuts to public education, against the Essential Services Act and against the amendments to the Trade Union Act which make joining a union more difficult in Saskatchewan.

Leading up to the provincial election of 2011, the SFL sees a golden opportunity to lobby further against cuts to public funding that hurt working people. There might be an opportunity for our Union to ask that the issue of quality undergraduate teaching at U of S be included in their material. See them online at http://www.sfl.sk.ca/pdfs/Labour_Issues_Newsletter_No%201.pdf.



Annual General Meeting

Friday December 10, at 4:30 p.m.
Faculty Club, Window Room

- (1) Approval of Agenda and Minutes of Term 1 Members' Meeting (October 21, 2010)
- (2) Treasurer's Report for last quarter of 2010 and Budget for 2011
 - (a) Motion from Executive Board: to approve the proposed budget for 2011 as presented by Secretary-Treasurer
- (3) Acceptance of New Members
- (4) Union-Management Report
 - (a) An instance of failure to honour right of first refusal in hiring
- (6) Report on Upcoming Sessional Budget Cuts
- (7) Bargaining Committee Report: from November 18, 19, 22 and 30
- (8) Report from Saskatchewan Federation of Labour Convention
 - (a) Motion from Executive Board: to support the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour's "Labour Issues" campaign by making to it the requested one-time contribution of \$3 per member by December 31, 2011 (Cost to union of about \$750)
- (9) Election of Officers for 2011: President, Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, Recording-Secretary, Newsletter Editor, Members-at-Large (up to 5) for 1 year terms; 1 Trustee for a 3 year term
- (10) Election of delegates to CUPE Saskatchewan Annual Meeting in March, 2011 in Regina.
- (11) Election of delegates to SDLC for 2011: AGM on the first weekend in February (Friday evening and Saturday).
- (12) Other Business

CUPE 3287 EXECUTIVE:

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