

CUPE 3287 Newsletter

News from Nowhere

University of Saskatchewan Sessional Lecturers' Union



Leslie Potter (left) and Lorna Donlevy attend a gallery exhibition showcasing work from sessional lecturers (p. 5)

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Dr. Brian Zamulinski Announces His Retirement as Vice-President of CUPE 3287

CUPE 3287 Member-at-large Eleanor Shia describes him as a "fighter," as someone who will stand up vehemently for the working conditions of sessional lecturers on our campus. Indeed, Vice-President Dr. Brian Zamulinski has dedicated many tireless years to the labour movement in Canada and internationally.

Brian's own words illustrate the deeply-held values that underlie his passion for labour justice: "Unions promote fairness, justice, and human dignity in the workplace. All of them are important." In his 12 years serving on the executive of



CUPE 3287, Brian has contributed a remarkable amount of energy and fervour to the pursuit of these important values. We were therefore dispirited when Brian

announced at our last meeting that he would not let his name stand as Vice-President in the upcoming election.

Brian has reached a point in his career when he begins to reflect upon the continued vitality of unions into the future:

"Organizations need renewal," he says. In stating this, he is perhaps suggesting that a fresher face could be able to match the fierce energy he has brought to the bargaining table and other dealings with employers – a truly impossible task for his replacement. He continues in his characteristically frank manner, "I need a break from dealing with overpaid bureaucrats who have no compunction about making people worse off in response to artificial budget crises."

A country boy in origin, Brian grew up in rural Saskatchewan. He completed his BA and MEd at the University of Saskatchewan and a MA at the University of Calgary. However, much of his career was spent teaching in various places in Asia, such as Tokyo, Sarawak (Malaysian Borneo), and Taiwan. It was during his time abroad that his enduring contributions to the labour movement took root.

While living in Japan, Brian joined the movement as a labour activist at the Tokyo Nambu branch of the National Union of General Workers. Brian's local advocated for gender equity in the workplace, achieving equal pay for all women in the membership. This was a hard-won right, rare in the geopolitical context of Japan, a country that still exhibits one of the largest gender-based wage gaps in the OECD. Additionally, Brian's work supported foreign workers, often marginalized, with precarious immigration statuses and little

recourse besides the union in cases where employers neglected to pay them in full.

"Organizations needs renewal [...] (and) I need a break from dealing with overpaid bureaucrats [...]"

Besides working in Asia, Brian completed a PhD in philosophy at La Trobe University in Melbourne, Australia, on a national scholarship. This was the beginning of a long and important research career consisting of more than a dozen philosophical articles published in such journals as *Ratio* (Wiley-Blackwell), the *Journal of Law and Courts* (University of Chicago Press), and *Religious Studies* (CUP). His proudest research achievement is the publication of his book in 2007, *Evolutionary Intuitionism: A Theory of the Origin and Nature of Moral Facts* with McGill-Queen's University Press. Regarding this tome, he admits, "I have literally got 'fan mail' praising my work from time to time. The best was from a Jesuit biologist, who backed it up by later including a section on my work in his book on the evolution of ethics."

After spending a significant number of years in the Eastern Hemisphere, Brian returned to the place of his childhood in a very literal way. In a poetic twist of fate, his childhood home, abandoned and empty, went up for sale in the small Saskatchewan town of his upbringing. Perhaps nostalgic, Brian decided to buy the property and fix it up, which ultimately brought him back to the Prince Albert area of Saskatchewan. At the same time, having freshly defended his doctoral thesis, he decided to take up a

teaching position at the Prince Albert campus of the University of Saskatchewan.

Brian has taught at our institution for more than twenty years, although he has subsequently moved from the Prince Albert campus to Saskatoon. Since the pandemic, Brian has embraced online instruction, which necessitated a shift in strategies that have allowed him to renew his teaching craft. Throughout his career, he has been dedicated to finding ways of challenging dogmatic patterns of thought in his students which cloud moral judgments and are a bane to critical thinking. It is needless to say that this type of mindful discernment is an essential quality to cultivate in our current era.

Brian aspires to continue his service to the union in the role of Member-at-large [...]

CUPE 3287 has had the pleasure of having Dr. Brian Zamulinski as its President during a 9-year period followed by a 3-year term as Vice-President which will end in December 2021. Brian aspires to continue his service to the union in the role of Member-at-large, a position that is up for election at the December members' meeting. His hope is that the union can still be able to benefit from the experience and memory he has accumulated during his long and distinguished career.

-Jeffrey Klassen, News and Communications Officer

President's Report

It's been a busy year. Probably it was bound to be, thanks to the pandemic, and all of the many changes that it has imposed on how we work and communicate. Still, though, even against that background, there's been a lot going on in recent weeks for our Union.

For one thing, we have an ongoing grievance. From time to time—in fact, more often than you might imagine—the “wrong candidate” is appointed to teach a course due to an error on the University's part. (“Wrong candidate” here means an applicant who does not have Right of First Refusal or who has a lower priority point total than another candidate who has

applied to teach the same course and who has ROFR and/or a higher priority point total.) When this occurs, one of two things can happen: 1) The wrong candidate is appointed anyway or 2) the wrong candidate's appointment is rescinded and the applicant with ROFR and/or higher priority points is appointed instead. There have been a few cases of the first type over the last few years, but in each of those cases the Union has intervened and the candidate who should have been appointed has been made whole (i.e., she receives the full stipend that she would have received for teaching the course, while the wrong candidate receives a full stipend for teaching the course).

Recently, however, the University has introduced an “innovation” for dealing with

cases of the second type—namely to rescind the wrong candidate’s appointment and offer 25% of the stipend that she would have received as compensation. The 25% figure is supposedly based on the Course Cancellation Fee described in Article 17 of our Collective Agreement (despite the fact that Article 17 is clearly concerned with cancelling a course offering, e.g., due to low enrollment, rather than rescinding an appointment).

The grievance that we are pursuing (there were initially two similar grievances, but one member has declined to go forward with the process) is of concern to our members for at least two reasons. First, when a sessional lecturer is hired to teach a course (especially if she is teaching it for the first time), she may put in a considerable amount of work before the first scheduled class—selecting and ordering textbooks, preparing lectures and teaching materials, preparing assessments, etc. It is arbitrary and unjust to assume, as the University seems to be assuming, that 25% of a stipend is adequate compensation for this work. Also, our Local cannot permit the University to simply make up new procedures at will out of whole cloth. Instead, any new procedure for dealing with appointments rescinded due error on the Employer’s part ideally should be resolved through collective bargaining and entrenched in our Collective Agreement.

We’ll be proceeding to stage one of this grievance likely within the next few weeks.

Our Union is also representing a member in a harassment claim under the University’s Discrimination and Harassment Prevention (DHP) policy. For reasons of confidentiality,

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none of the facts of the case can be discussed here. In the Union’s view, however, the case appears to be an instance of the DHP policy being used to silence one of members on account of past criticism of University administration. While our Union is of course supportive of policies intended to prevent or punish harassment, we cannot allow those policies to be used as a means to constrain the academic freedom of our members.

And, as many of you will be aware, we’ve also been engaged in collective bargaining. To date, our Negotiating Committee has had five bargaining sessions with the employer, with several more scheduled over the next few weeks. As I’ve reported previously, the Committee has been arguing for a number of proposals of great importance to our members, including a fair and equitable increase to sessional lecturer stipends at all levels, enhanced job security, an improved benefit plan (including vision care), recognition for the contributions that sessional lecturers make to the life of the University outside of the classroom, and restoring voluntary access to a pension plan. We have also agreed to incorporate into the current round of collective bargaining discussions concerning how per-course instructors in the Distance Education Unit (who, prior to September, 2020, were in scope of ASPA) will be integrated into our Local. As I’ve also reported previously, it so

far appears that the two sides in these negotiations remain quite far apart and that negotiations likely will be ongoing for some time.

These are just some of the highlights of what your Union has been doing on your behalf over the last few months. I'll be briefing the membership about all of these things (and probably others besides) at our Annual General Meeting coming up on December 7th, which I urge all of you to attend (see later in this newsletter for more information).

Finally, however, it is with considerable regret that I must report that Brian

Zamulinski has indicated to the Executive Board he will not be seeking another term as Vice-President of our Local. Brian has served our Union in a number of roles over many years – including several terms as President. His expertise and experience have been invaluable aids to all of us who serve, or who have served previously, on the Union's Executive. It is genuinely difficult to imagine how we will get along without him serving in a leadership role.

Hope to see you all (virtually) at the AGM.

-Will Buschert, President of CUPE 3287

Sessional Lecturers' Art on Display

Members of our local do much more than just teaching. Many of us conduct research and carry out different forms of service for the university. During the Staff and Sessional Exhibition held by the Department of Art and Art History (CAS), an annual event since 2007, visitors can encounter a sublime example of sessional lecturers' involvement in the creative life of the campus. *like this and like that* was the title of the last exhibit held February 20 to March 5, 2020, at THE GALLERY/art placement inc. in downtown Saskatoon. The exhibition displayed works produced by a long list of artists, provided in the right column, who are also employed as staff or as sessional lecturers in the department. We extend our hearty (but belated) congratulations to our union members for their artistic achievements!

Unfortunately, pandemic safety concerns prevented the group from putting on a show in Winter 2021, and it remains to be seen whether one will go ahead in 2022. If so, we will be sure to communicate the details to our membership!

*Joseph Anderson
Terry Billings
Patrick Bulas
Ann Donald
Xiao Han
Clint Hunker
Grant McConnell
Barbara Reimer
Frances Robson
Jordan Schwab
Jacob Semko
Nik Semenovff
Laura St Pierre
Shawn Zheng*



-Jeffrey Klassen, News and Communications Officer

Call for Nominations

The Annual General Meeting for CUPE 3287 will take place **Tuesday, December 7, at 4pm**, via Zoom.

Several positions on the CUPE 3287 Executive will be up for election at the members' meeting. Furthermore, our vice-president Brian Zamulinski has announced that he will not let his name stand for Vice-President in the election, which leaves the position open, without a nominee to date.

Under [CUPE 3287's Bylaws](#) [PDF, 608 KB], approved by CUPE National in August, 2019, the positions of President, Recording Secretary and News & Communications Officer are to be elected in even numbered years; Vice-President and Secretary-Treasurer in odd numbered years, and Members-at-Large are to be elected each year.

As it specified in the [CUPE National Constitution](#) [PDF, 666 KB], "The term of office for all officers must be not less than one year and not more than three years. At the first election of officers, three Trustees will be elected to serve terms of one, two and three years. In following years one Trustee will be elected for a three-year term to preserve overlapping terms" (Article B.2.4).

Accordingly, at our upcoming Annual General Meeting on December 7th, the following positions on the CUPE 3287 Executive Board will be filled by election:

**Vice-President
Secretary-Treasurer
Members-at-Large (up to five)
One trustee**

Any member in good standing who wishes to be nominated for these positions can either a) self-nominate at the meeting, b) be nominated by another member at the meeting (provided that the person seeking nomination is in attendance) or, if she is not in attendance at the meeting, c) provide written consent to be nominated witnessed by another member to be presented at the meeting. (See Bylaws, Section 10 (b) for specifics).

Annual General Meeting, December 2021

Via Zoom

Show your solidarity with labour justice!

Invitation links have been distributed to the membership via email. If you have not received your invitation email, please contact

cupe3287@gmail.com

Tuesday, December 7, 2021

4:00pm – 6:00pm

Agenda on following page





ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

DECEMBER 7, 2021, 4:00 PM

VIA ZOOM

(MEETING INVITATIONS CIRCULATED VIA EMAIL)

Agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Roll Call of Officers
3. Reading of the Equality Statement
4. Adoption of Minutes, Fall Membership Meeting of October 15, 2021
5. Matters Arising from the Minutes
6. Secretary-Treasurer's Report
7. News and Communications Officer's Report
8. Correspondence & Communications
9. Executive Board Report
 - a. Negotiating Committee Update
 - b. Grievance & Case Work Report
 - c. AP/PD Fund Accounting Concerns
 - d. For Information: Amalgamation of fine arts departments
10. Elections: Vice-President; Secretary-Treasurer; Members-at-Large (up to five); Trustee (1)
11. Election: Delegate(s) to Saskatoon & District Labour Council AGM (February 5, 2022; via Zoom)
12. Election: Delegate(s) to CUPE SK Convention, (Date and format TBA)
13. New Business
14. Good of the Union

Adjournment

CUPE Equality Statement

Union solidarity is based on the principle that union members are equal and deserve mutual respect at all levels. Any behaviour that creates conflict prevents us from working together to strengthen our union.

As unionists, mutual respect, cooperation and understanding are our goals. We should neither condone nor tolerate behaviour that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any individual or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Discriminatory speech or conduct which is racist, sexist, transphobic or homophobic hurts and thereby divides us. So too, does discrimination on the basis of ability, age, class, religion, language and ethnic origin.

Sometimes discrimination takes the form of harassment. Harassment means using real or perceived power to abuse, devalue or humiliate. Harassment should not be treated as a joke. The uneasiness and resentment that it

creates are not feelings that help us grow as a union.

Discrimination and harassment focus on characteristics that make us different; and they

"Discriminatory speech or conduct [...] hurts and thereby divides us."

reduce our capacity to work together on shared concerns such as decent wages, safe working conditions, and justice in the workplace, society and in our union.

CUPE's policies and practices must reflect our commitment to equality. Members, staff and elected officers must be mindful that all persons deserve dignity, equality and respect.

-Mark Hancock, National President
-Charles Fleury, National Secretary-Treasurer

Contact the Union

Our office in McLean Hall remains closed due to COVID-19 safety measures. We continue to receive postal mail as well as voicemails and email.

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