

CUPE3287

University of Saskatchewan Sessional Lecturers

News From Nowhere

Year 34, Number 2

April 2023 Newsletter

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President's Report

Possibly you've already heard about one of our biggest news items of the last few weeks. In early February, the employer applied to the Saskatchewan Labour Relations Board (SLRB) for a mail-in "ordered" vote on its "best and final offer," effectively bypassing negotiations. While this is legally permissible, a forced vote of this sort is uncommon and is typically considered a 'hard bargaining' practice. CUPE 3287's Negotiating Committee recommended that members reject the employer's offer (see the [February issue of the newsletter](#) for details). I'm pleased to report that when the votes were tallied by the SLRB on March 13, the employer's offer was decisively rejected, with 69.4% of valid votes cast voting 'no'. This is, I think, an indication that the Committee was effective in getting its message out to the membership.

Allow me to put this in context, however.

Prior to the forced vote, our Local had been in negotiations with the employer for nearly two full years. In the early phases of bargaining, the employer had set out a number of proposals that, in the Committee's view, would have been completely unacceptable to members – such as their proposal to make Right of First Refusal (ROFR) much more difficult to establish and maintain, and their several proposals that would have significantly increased the number of postdocs, grad students, and 'celebrity' scholars able to teach on a per course basis outside of our bargaining unit (and thereby take work that might otherwise have gone to our members). In addition, from the beginning of negotiations, the employer flatly rejected all costed proposals put forward by our Committee – including improvements to benefits, restored access to a pension plan, and additional support for our Academic Participation/Participation and Tuition Waiver Fund. At this point – *circa*

mid-May 2022 – the employer's wage offer was a 0% stipend increase for 2021 and a 1.5% increase each year for 2022, 2023, and 2024.

In view of the lack of progress in negotiations, both parties agreed in late August 2022, to enter into voluntary mediation. Over the course of five mediation meetings, it became clear to the Committee, however, that the employer was not especially interested in actual mediation, but instead appeared to be attempting to game the mediation process (e.g., by re-introducing proposals that they had previously agreed to set aside earlier in the process). Accordingly, on November 7, 2022, our Negotiating Committee advised that Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety that negotiations between CUPE 3287 and the University of Saskatchewan were at impasse. Under Saskatchewan law, this triggers a 60 day mandatory conciliation process.

At the one and only conciliation meeting, held on December 16, 2022, the employer simply conveyed through the conciliator a version of its "best and final offer." In that offer, the employer agreed to withdraw all of its earlier proposals – including those that would have eviscerated ROFR. But the offer also stipulated that all Union proposals withdrawn during mediation would continue to be withdrawn. In other words, apart from some significant but relatively minor changes regarding teaching assessment and performance review, as well as some minor technical changes, our collective agreement would remain essentially *status quo*. There was one significant development, however: The employer now proposed to effectively double its wage offer to 0%, 3%, 3%, 3% over a four year agreement beginning September 1, 2021, but with no retroactive pay.

As I've reported earlier, this was in the Negotiating Committee's view, the first significant movement on money matters that we had seen since the beginning of negotiations. A 3% per year increase over three years is, of course, not nearly as much as U of S sessional lecturers deserve, and it is not nearly enough to compensate for inflation, which over the last year or so has been running at generational highs. Nonetheless, it was the Committee's view that this *could* be an offer that it would be willing to take to membership for ratification, *if* the University would agree to make the proposed stipend increase retroactive to September 1, 2022. The University countered by offering retroactivity to January 1, 2023 (i.e., the beginning of the Winter term), but refused to go any further. Rather than continuing to negotiate, the employer applied to the SLRB for the ordered vote mentioned above.

When the forced vote failed, the Negotiating Committee had to make some decisions. Since no revised offer was immediately forthcoming from the employer, we committed to motivating the employer to resume bargaining by calling a strike mandate vote. (Note that this is not the same thing as a *strike vote*. A strike mandate vote is a motion which, in effect, asks the membership to authorize the Committee to call a strike vote in the future.) That vote had been scheduled for our End-of-Term membership meeting, coming up on April 6.

On March 22, however, the employer communicated a revised tentative offer through the conciliator agreeing to meet our demand for retroactive pay starting from September 1, 2022. Since then, the parties have been working to come to final agreement about precise terms (which, frankly, is proving to be much more taxing than it should be). If the parties can come to agreement about the precise terms of the offer, the Committee may be presenting this to the membership for ratification at a subsequent

membership meeting. In view of this, the Committee believes that a strike mandate vote is not appropriate at this time and has withdrawn the strike mandate motion from the agenda for the April 6 membership meeting. This withdrawal is, so to speak, *without prejudice*, however: Should the parties be unable to agree on final terms, or should the offer be rejected by the membership, a strike mandate vote may still be introduced at a later date.

I imagine that many of you will have questions and comments about all of this. Accordingly, I invite you to come out – either in person or via Zoom – to the End-of-Term Membership Meeting being held on **Thursday, April 6**, starting at **3:30 PM**, in Health Sciences **1B11** (see the agenda later in the newsletter for more information).

In addition to discussion of bargaining issues, the meeting will also include a by-election for one Trustee position which remained unfilled at our previous membership meeting. If you are a member in good standing of CUPE 3287 and you are interested in standing for election to this position, you can self-nominate at the meeting or, if you will be unable to attend the meeting, communicate your consent to be nominated to another member for presentation at the meeting. As always, I urge all members of our Local to attend.

William Buschert
CUPE 3287 President

CUPE 3287 Academic Participation/ Development & Tuition Fund

Dear members,

We would like to extend our congratulations to all the successful recipients of the fund this year, listed below. It's been a record-breaking year for us, with a higher number of applicants than ever before. This shows that more and more members are engaging with the fund, which is fantastic news.

However, due to the overwhelming number of applications, the total amount of money requested exceeded our funding limit. Regrettably, we were unable to offer the full tuition waiver amount to all eligible students this time. Instead, we offered a reduced waiver to ensure that everyone who met the criteria could benefit from the fund.

We recognize that the employer has not increased the fund in several years, and we share your concerns about this. Our hope is to negotiate a higher funding amount from the employer in the future, which would enable us to keep up with the growing demand for the fund.

In the meantime, we understand that resources are becoming more limited, and we will continue to do our best to ensure that the fund is distributed fairly and equitably.

Once again, congratulations to all the successful recipients, and thank you to all the members who applied. We are proud to support our members' remarkable dynamism as they actively participate in the academic community, develop their career skills, and pursue further education.

Sincerely,
Jeffery Klassen
Vice President, CUPE 3287

Name	APPD Purpose	Amount
Meridith Clare Burles	Conference travel and attendance	1000.00
Emma Xing Chen	Conference travel and attendance	3595.00
Andrea Lynn Dunk	Conference travel and attendance	1900.00
Gang Li	Professional dues	472.50
Grant McConnell	Publication of book (200 print run)	1400.00
Jessica McDonald	Research trip	1770.58
Amir Payan	Conference travel and attendance	1606.00
Jordan Schwab	Artist residency	1315.00

Jacob Semko	Printmaking equipment and materials	2953.00
Eleanor Shia	Conference travel and attendance	1540.00
Laura St. Pierre	Artist residency	2478.00
Stavros Stavrou	Conference travel and attendance	3000.00
Tristan Brent Taylor	Conference travel and attendance	2662.68
Jason Zorbas	Conference travel and attendance	1805.00
José Alvim Berkenbrock	Tuition waiver	763.65
Samantha Black	Tuition waiver	763.65
Thamirys de Oliveira	Tuition waiver	763.65
Mikael Fausto Del Castillo Valenzuela	Tuition waiver	763.65
Mark Doerksen	Tuition waiver	763.65
Justin Fisher	Tuition waiver	763.65
Denise Huynh	Tuition waiver	763.65
Bianca Jamal	Tuition waiver	763.65
Letitia Barbara Johnson	Tuition waiver	763.65
Mckelvey Brynn Kelly	Tuition waiver	763.65
Candice Klein	Tuition waiver	763.65
Toluwase Olukayode	Tuition waiver	763.65
Amir Payan	Tuition waiver	763.65
Sydney Rine	Tuition waiver	763.65
Danielle Spence	Tuition waiver	763.65
Clarence Malcolm Todd	Tuition waiver	763.65
Kristen Marie Vandenameele	Tuition waiver	763.65

Parking Spaces for Spring/Summer Term 2023

CUPE 3287 makes a limited number of parking spaces available to sessional faculty on a cost-recovery Basis. The union purchases parking spaces from Usask's Parking and Transportation Services (PTS) and resells them to member in smaller portions than would otherwise be available. This allows sessionals to purchase parking in choice lots where the waiting list for parking through PTS is years long.

Spaces are available in F Lot and V Lot. Locations of these lots are shown on the [Campus Parking Lots Map](#).

Parking spaces are made available on a 'first come, first served' basis; spaces are not reserved until payment has been received. Please note that the available number of spaces is relatively small and they sell out quickly. Costs are outlined below.

Starting Monday, April 3, please contact the CUPE 3287 Parking Coordinator, Roberta Campbell-Chudoba at cupe3287parking@gmail.com to arrange for parking and payment.

The 2023 Spring/Summer Session Rate is \$85.00/quarter (~\$21.00/week)

Q1: May 8 to June 1

Q2: June 2 to June 30

Q3: June 27 to July 26

Q4: July 27 to August 22

PAYMENT IS BY E-TRANSFER OR CHEQUE.

Sheaf Article on Sessional Instructors by Annie Liu

Please check out the March 29 issue of the Sheaf to read Annie Liu's excellent (and timely) article, "[Overworked and Underpaid: The Reality of Being a Sessional Instructor at USask](#)"

End-of-Term Membership Meeting

Thursday, April 06, 2023

3:30 pm

This will be a hybrid meeting:

In-Person: Health Sciences 1B11

&

Remote: Via Zoom

Zoom invitations have been sent to the membership via email. If you have not received your invitation email, please contact cupe3287@gmail.com

The agenda and minutes from the previous meeting have been distributed to the membership via email

Agenda on following page



WINTER MEMBERSHIP MEETING

April 6, 2023, 3:30 PM

Health Sciences 1B11 & via Zoom

(Zoom 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, Winter Term Membership Meeting, February 21, 2023
5. Oath of Office: MALs elected at last membership meeting
6. Matters Arising from the Minutes
7. Secretary-Treasurer's Report
8. News & Communications Officer's Report
9. Correspondence & Communications
10. Executive Committee Report
 - a. Negotiations/Conciliation Update: Failure of University's forced vote on its "best and final offer"
 - b. Grievance & Case Work Report
 - c. SJUMC Report 11. Election: Trustee (one position, 2023-2024)
12. New Business
13. 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 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

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If you would like to submit an article to our newsletter or would like to join our committee, please contact news.cupe3287@gmail.com