

CUPE3287

University of Saskatchewan Sessional Lecturers

News From Nowhere

Year 36, Issue 2

July 2025 Newsletter



Members of CUPE Saskatchewan getting ready to take part in this year's Saskatoon Pride Parade on June 22. CUPE 3287 proudly supports its 2SLGBTQ+ members. (Photo Credit: Kent Peterson)

In This Issue

President's Report	p. 3
Sessional Profile: Jacob Semko	p. 5
Become a Member in Good Standing	p. 8
Fall Parking Sales	p. 9
Save the Date: CUPE 3287 Welcome Back BBQ is on September 12!	p. 10
Notice of By-Election: One Additional Member of the Negotiating Committee	p. 10
July 23 Members Meeting	p. 12
Agenda	p. 13
Equality Statement	p. 14

The CUPE 3287 Executive appreciates all the support from U of S Sessional Lecturers!

To show our thanks to our amazing members, we are having a draw during the summer membership meeting for a chance to **win \$25 to any members that attend in person!**

Table officers will be excluded from the draw, but Members-at-Large will be included.

Donuts and coffee will also be served.

Please attend the CUPE 3287 Summer Membership Meeting 2:00pm, Wednesday, July 23 in Room 44 in the Edwards School of Business.

More member meeting details can be found further in the newsletter.

President's Report

I hope you've been enjoying your summer. If you were seeking teaching employment, I hope you've gotten the courses you were hoping to teach; if you are teaching now, I hope your courses are going well.

Back to Bargaining

Our local's main task for the upcoming year will be negotiations. Our current [Collective Agreement](#) expires on August 31, 2025 and, starting in early September, we will be heading into a new round of collective bargaining. Our Negotiating Committee (me, Jeffery Klassen, Patrick Bulas, Pearson Ahiahonu, our CUPE National rep. Will Bauer – and possibly one additional member elected at our upcoming membership meeting) will be working hard to ensure the best possible deal for sessional faculty at the U of S.

The Committee has already met several times (and will likely meet several times more over the course of the summer) to develop a package of bargaining proposals. To date, some of the main items included in those proposals are: a fair and equitable increase to sessional lecturer stipends, enhanced job security, an improved benefit plan (including access to vision care), recognition for the contributions that sessional faculty make to the University outside of the classroom and restoring voluntary access to a pension plan. If this sounds familiar, it may be because these were some of the main items brought forward by our local in our *last* round of

bargaining beginning in 2020. In the event, virtually all of those proposals were set aside when, in February 2023, the employer applied to the Saskatchewan Labour Relations Board (SLRB) for a mail-in “ordered” vote on its “best and final offer,” effectively ending negotiations. We are, I think, better prepared to get our point across this time around.

And there may be some additional cause for optimism on this front. For most of its history our local's primary of contact with the University (both in negotiations and in day to day matters) has been with Employee and Labour Relations. Recently, however, at the employer's initiative, our local's primary point of contact has been changed to the office of the Vice-Provost Faculty Relations. At least so far, this seems to be a basically positive development. It is encouraging to be dealing with individuals who have some awareness of what instructors actually do and what teaching actually requires. Possibly this will lead to a more cooperative spirit in our next round of collective bargaining.

Online Course Appointments

Some of you (at least a dozen of you, by my estimate) have received letters of offer to teach online courses in the 2025-26 academic year only to have those offers rescinded sometime in the last month or so. Apparently, those whose offers have been rescinded are to be re-appointed to

positions in-scope of ASPA, rather than CUPE 3287.

This is ultimately due to an [arbitration award](#) issued by Sheila Denysiuk in 2022, which found that the University had breached the Administrative and Supervisory Personnel Association (ASPA) collective agreement by unilaterally transferring online instructor positions previously in-scope of ASPA into CUPE 3287. For nearly three years following the arbitrator's award the University had indicated that it would seek judicial review of (i.e., appeal) the arbitrator's decision. The University recently changed its mind about this, however. What is now holding up appointments for online instructors is the need for the University and ASPA to sign a memorandum of agreement (MOA) implementing the arbitrator's award. According to my most recent discussions with ASPA, this is supposed to happen "soon," presumably within the next few days. As this newsletter goes to press, however, it has not yet happened.

Considering that Fall term classes begin just a bit more than thirty days from now, this is cutting things rather close. But, as those of us who have been around for a while can attest, that's seemingly par for the course at the U of S.

Incidentally, let me point out that CUPE 3287 did not intervene in the original arbitration because online and distance courses offered in-scope of ASPA historically offered better pay and (at least potentially) better benefits than on-campus courses offered in-scope of CUPE 3287. Prior to the University's transfer of online

courses into CUPE 3287 in 2020, a good number of our members had taught online and distance courses, not only for the sake of better remuneration, but also as a way of bypassing the 12 CU maximum teaching assignment currently imposed by our collective agreement (Article 16.04). Once the ASPA MOA is signed, CUPE 3287 may theoretically lose a few members (i.e., those individuals who thereafter may be teaching in ASPA positions only), but the individuals affected will be getting a significantly better deal—and, as a matter of principle, our union does not stand in the way of people getting a better deal.

In Other News

Over the last few months our local has successfully intervened to avoid potential grievances in at least three cases in the Edwards School of Business and, in the School for the Arts, successfully stood up for our members' right to compensated for teaching materials under Article 33.02 of our collective agreement. I'll be briefing the membership about these cases, and other issues besides, at our upcoming our **Summer Membership Meeting on Wednesday, July 23rd** (details, including the agenda for the meeting, can be found elsewhere in this newsletter). I encourage all of you to come out (either in person or via Zoom); I especially encourage new members of our local to attend. Hope to see you all then.

William Buschert
CUPE 3287 President

Sessional Profile: Jacob Semko



Photo Credit: Nathaniel Puffalt

“A pure aesthetic experience” is how Jacob Semko describes the first time he lifted the paper off his printing plate on one of the presses in the printmaking studio at the University of Saskatchewan. Semko took his first printmaking class when he was eighteen years old, beginning with lithography, often considered to be one of the more technically challenging print mediums. Undeterred, he diligently followed instructions step by step, not completely understanding the process but trusting in it. Semko still remembers time stopping and getting goosebumps when he saw his first print and he immediately became enamored by the printmaking process.

Discovering his love of printmaking, Semko got an override to take a 200 level printmaking class in the following spring term with Nik Semenoff, a Saskatoon artist recognized internationally for his innovations in printmaking. Semko was strongly influenced by Semenoff’s passion for printmaking, who would often stay in the studio throughout the day working with students, and soon the two worked closely together. Semenoff was not held back by tradition and his approach to printmaking emphasized health and safety and accessibility to materials, finding supplies at the hardware store versus seeking them out at more expensive art stores. He was always willing to share his research and make his knowledge available to everyone.

Semenoff passed away in 2022 at the age of 93. Semko, along with his partner Jenny Ly and Jon Bath, an Associate Professor in the School for the Arts, recently completed a research project revising an earlier publication of Semenoff’s research authored by Semko in 2003. The project includes text, video, and step-by-step instructions of Semenoff’s work, specifically his development of waterless lithography. In keeping with Semenoff’s belief in sharing his knowledge, the entire project is available for public use through the U of S.

After completing his BFA at the U of S, Semko attended graduate school at the University of Cincinnati. He began teaching in 2006, and in addition to his sessional work at the U of S, he has taught at several schools including the University of Cincinnati, Queens University, and Northern Kentucky University. Semko has also attended artist residencies in China and Ireland, where he taught and produced artwork.

While at Queens, Semko had the opportunity to work and teach alongside Otis Tamashaukus, a world-renowned artist and teacher. Tamashaukus' nontraditional approach to printmaking would later influence Semko's studio practice in Saskatoon.

Semko appreciates the opportunity to share his love of printmaking with students and works to make the classroom studio a safe, positive, and inclusive environment where everyone can have the opportunity to have the same "pure aesthetic experience" that he first had when he was a student. He finds that students respond well to the hands-on nature of a studio class, where printmaking must be directly experienced to understand it.

For his dedication to teaching, Semko received a USSU Teaching Excellence Award in 2015.

Semko's latest series of prints is a collaboration with his partner Jenny Ly who isn't formally trained as an artist or a printmaker and brings an unconventional, experimental approach to their work.

The print series began to take shape about eight years ago when Ly began to take a series of roadside photos from the window of their vehicle during the valuable spare time found during family road trips or driving their two young children to and from various kids' activities. In the evening, with their children asleep, Semko and Ly would discuss the formal qualities of the photos and how they could be translated into large, multicolor woodblock prints.



Semko & Ly in their studio. (Photo Credit: Nathaniel Puffalt)

Working on a large scale presented some technical challenges for Semko and Ly. Custom rubber rollers needed to be fabricated to properly ink the surface of the large blocks and the layers of color found in each print would require hand carving and multiple printing, which would be both labor and time intensive.

Initially, Semko was hesitant to dedicate the time for working out how to build large custom rollers. He was more interested in working in the studio rather than producing the rollers used to make the art. However, the rollers were necessary to make the large prints that he and Ly wanted to work



One of the recent woodblock prints created by Jacob Semko and Jenny Ly. (Photo Credit: Jacob Semko)

on. Semko first reached out to Takach Press, a major supplier of printmaking equipment, but the technician that built custom rollers had retired. Eventually they found a manufacturer in Winnipeg, Fort Garry Rubber, and discovered that Nik Semenoff had custom rollers made there years prior and the owner of the company had one of his prints titled “Jacob’s Coat.”

A CNC machine, a computer-controlled carving system, was procured with the intention to use the technology to save time and labor by using the machine to carve the printing blocks. However, Semko and Ly soon learned that the CNC machine has its own challenges and limitations just like any other tool and did not really save any time. Instead, they adapted how they used the CNC machine, and it became an incredibly effective tool in the studio, allowing for repeatability and accuracy.

Consequently, the blocks were created through a combination of the CNC machine and traditional carving tools.

Both the custom rollers and the CNC machine were purchased through the CUPE 3287 Professional Development Fund and Semko and Ly greatly appreciate the support provided by the union.

Rather than using printmaking as a technique to produce accurate multiples of the same image, Semko and Ly use it in their woodcut landscapes as an artistic medium to create varied editions or different versions of the same image allowing for experimentation with ink opacity, color blending and wood veneer texture.

The large color woodcut prints celebrate the beauty of the Saskatchewan landscape and are meant to invoke an emotional response of joy, calm, and tranquility. Semko is influenced by the work of several Saskatchewan landscape painters including Wyonna Mulcaster, Terry Fenton, and Greg Hardy.

Through the combination of modern technology and traditional techniques, Semko and Ly continue to work together to create prints that are truly unique to Saskatchewan and the world.

Patrick Bulas
CUPE 3287 News & Communications
Officer

Jacob Semko and Jenny Ly's upcoming exhibition, "Roadside Series: A Saskatchewan Print Story," will be at the Saskatchewan Craft Council Gallery on Broadway Avenue from August 30 to November 1, 2025.

For more information, please visit [Roadside Series: A Saskatchewan Print Story - Saskatchewan Craft Council](#)

Follow Jacob Semko and Jenny Ly on Instagram: [yxebackyardstudios](#)

Become a Member in Good Standing

As you probably already know, if you have been hired as a sessional lecturer at the University of Saskatchewan, you are automatically a dues-paying member of CUPE 3287. The union represents all of its dues-paying members in collective bargaining and protects the interests of all of its members in their interactions with the University (for example, in grievance procedures).

In order to vote in union elections or referenda or to hold office in the union, however, dues-paying members must submit an application in order to become [members in good standing](#). If you plan to attend or to vote or to stand for office at our upcoming membership meeting on July 23rd, and you haven't already done so, please [submit a membership application](#) beforehand.

The rule that only members in good standing are eligible to vote in union elections or to hold union office has been part of the [CUPE National Constitution](#) from its inception. Until recently, however, our local did not actively enforce this rule. It will be doing so from now on, however.

We've been working to ensure that 'member in good standing' status is accurately reflected in our current membership records. For the great majority of currently or recently employed members this has already been done. However, since membership in our local continues for 24 months after an individual's most recent teaching appointment, and since individuals may resume membership in our local after a significant absence from teaching, we need to go through our historical records (dating back more than 30 years!) to ensure accuracy and completeness. We aim to have this work completed by the end of August, 2025.

The practical upshot for individual members is simple, however: If you are attending a membership meeting and there is any doubt in your mind whatsoever about whether you have submitted a membership application previously, sign and submit an application form then and there.

Submitted by William Buschert

Parking spaces for the 2025 Fall Term will go on sale beginning Monday, August 4th, 2025

The union makes a limited number of parking spaces available to sessional lecturers on a cost-recovery basis. The union purchases parking spaces from U of S Parking and Transportation Services (PTS) and resells them to members in smaller portions than would otherwise be available. This allows sessional lecturers to purchase parking in 'choice' lots where the waiting list for parking through PTS is often more than a decade long.

13 spaces are available (11 in F Lot and 2 in V Lot). Locations of these lots can be viewed 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 tend to sell out quickly.

Starting Monday, August 4, 2025, please contact the CUPE 3287 Parking Coordinator, Roberta Campbell-Chudoba: cupe3287parking@gmail.com or mobile: (306) 222-5781 to purchase space.

Lot F or Lot V

Peak Time Rate (Monday to Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM)

- \$22.50/hour/week/term
- Minimum 6 hours/week/term (minimum purchase is \$135.00 = \$33.75/month)
- Maximum charge (cap) after 20 hours/week/term: \$440.00/term (\$110.00/month) – gives 24/7 access to the chosen lot

Off-Peak Rate (Monday to Friday, 4:00 PM to 8:00 AM)

- \$5.00/hour/week/term

Payment is by e-transfer or cheque.



Notice of By-Election

At the upcoming members meeting on July 23rd, we will be holding a by-election for one (1) additional member of our Negotiating Committee.

A description of the duties of this position can be found in our [Bylaws](#) [pdf]. Members of the Negotiating Committee receive a stipend of \$55 per meeting attended.

If you are interested in standing for election for this position, you may self-nominate at the meeting. If you wish to stand for the position, but will be unable to attend the meeting, please [contact our Recording Secretary](#), Eleni Arvanitis-Zorbas, to communicate your nomination at least one week prior. Please note that only members in good standing (i.e., members who have submitted a membership application and had it approved by the membership) are eligible to vote in our local's elections. You can [submit a membership application online](#).

Summer Membership Meeting

2:00 PM, Saturday, July 23, 2025

Edwards School of Business (ESB) 44 and via Zoom

Zoom invitations and meeting materials will be distributed via email leading up to the meeting.

Reminder: by-elections will be held at this meeting for:

One Additional Member of our Negotiating Committee

Delegate to CUPE National Convention
(Toronto, Oct. 6-10, 2025)

Descriptions of the duties of each of these positions can be found in our [Bylaws](#) [pdf].

If you are interested in standing for election for any of these positions, please [contact our Recording Secretary](#), Eleni Arvanitis-Zorbas, to communicate your nomination at least one week prior to the meeting.

Agenda on following page



SUMMER MEMBERSHIP MEETING

July 23, 2025, 2:00 PM

Edwards School of Business (ESB) 44 and via Zoom

AGENDA

1. Acknowledgement of Indigenous Territory
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Roll Call of Officers
4. Reading of the Equality Statement
5. Motion: Acceptance of New Members in Good Standing
6. Adoption of Minutes, Membership Meeting, April 5, 2025
7. Matters Arising from the Minutes
8. Secretary-Treasurer's Report
9. News & Communications Officer's Report
10. Parking Coordinator's Report
11. Correspondence & Communications
12. Executive Committee Report
 - a. Update on ASPA arbitration award, re: online instruction
 - b. Case Work/Grievance/SJUMC Report
 - c. A&S pilot for new online 'Internal Sessional Hiring Process'
 - d. State of AP/PD/TW Fund
 - e. Report on CBA Negotiations
13. Election: Member of the Negotiating Committee (one)
14. Election: Delegate to CUPE National Convention (Toronto, Oct. 6-10, 2025)
15. New Business
16. Adjournment

Acknowledgement of Indigenous Territory

As we gather here today, we acknowledge we are on Treaty 6 Territory and the homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.

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

Contact the Union

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Newsletter Editorial Board

Editor:

Patrick Bulas

Committee Members:

Will Buschert, Jeffrey Klassen,
Eleanor Shia

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

How Are We Doing?

Is there something you want to see published in the newsletter?

**Have something related to what we do as sessional lecturers that you want
posted on Facebook, Instagram, or Blue Sky?**

Is there an event or news that would be of interest to sessional lecturers?

Please let us know.

Contact the [News & Communications Committee](#).