

CUPE 3913

Teaching Assistants and Sessional Lecturers at the University of Guelph

NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2023

FEATURED TOPICS

What's going on?

- **Thank you to those who attended our Crafts Night!**
- **Member Mobilizers Needed!**
- **Fall Tabling Schedule**
- **New CUPE3913 Website Launch**
- **Members in Good Standing**
- **Want to be more involved in the union? Join the union today!**

Learn more about...

- **Bargaining Updates**
- **Appointments for Sessional Lecturers**
- **Get to Know Your Union:** Safia Mahabub Sauty, CUPE3913 Equity Officer
- **Benefits:** know your benefits and claim up to \$600/\$1200 (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

RECAP OF CRAFTS NIGHT

Thanks to everyone that came out for Crafts Night on October 26.

Spooky crafts were made and treats and food were eaten!

These social nights are for our members to enjoy, destress, and communicate with other members and your union!

Look forward to other social events this coming year.



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What's going on ---

MEMBER MOBILIZERS NEEDED!

Are you a member that wants to be more involved in the union? If so, become a member mobilizer! As our collective agreement has expired in August, we are heading into another round of collective bargaining.

We are in need of member mobilizers whose role is to keep our members informed about our bargaining agenda.

Goals of a member mobilizer:

- This paid position, allows mobilizers to dedicate their time to push the bargaining agenda of our union
- They will be involved in tabling, distribution of materials, keeping members up to date on social media
- Working closely with the Bargaining Committee



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What's going on

FALL TABLING SCHEDULE

Come visit us at the UC Courtyard from **10:00am-2:00pm** at these following dates to learn more about the union, bargaining, and to ask us any questions!

- November 8
- November 22
- December 6



MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING



We would like to encourage all those who have not become a Member in Good Standing (MGS) yet to consider doing so! Having many MGS demonstrates to the University that we are a strong Union, allowing us to push for initiatives that can improve the working and living conditions for TAs and Sessionals (e.g., higher wages, job security, fair work conditions). If you're not an MGS yet, sign up now by filling out the online form [here](#) or scanning the QR code on the left.

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What's going on

NEW WEBSITE LAUNCH

With the launch of the new website, we want to address some important information to our members:

- The address remains the same <https://cupe3913.on.ca/>
- Your login is your uoguelph or guelphhumber email address
- Members will be required to change their password during their first login.
- Please update your member profile and add family members if needed

Claims

- To submit a claim,
 - Select "My Account"(top right)
 - From the pulldown menu select the type of claim that you would like to make(ie: Unit 1 claim, EFAF claim or Unit 2 claim)
 - Select "New Claim" Enter the claim information, click next
 - On the next page upload your claim documents and click submit.
- We have changed the structure of the benefits plan
 - **Unit 1 members:** the limit of \$300 for vision & \$300 for mental health has changed to \$600 in total for vision/mental health claims. Members can use the \$600 for either expense and for any amount up to \$600.
 - Mental health claims are now being reimbursed at 100%.
 - **Unit 2 members:** the limit of \$1000 and \$200 for prescriptions has changed to \$1200 for any medical expense currently covered under the benefits program.
- EFAF claims are now being processed through the members portal. We are no longer processing EFAF claims via email.
- EFAF application forms are no longer required.

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What's going on

WANT TO BE MORE INVOLVED IN THE UNION? JOIN US TODAY!

Do you want to be more directly involved in our union? If so, you can apply to be a steward!

What is a union steward?

Stewards play a central part in building stronger unions. They have two fundamental roles: they make sure working conditions reflect the collective agreement, and they connect the membership to each other and to the union.

Currently there are vacant positions listed below:

- College Stewards for College of Arts and OVC
- Department Stewards for most programs

Do you want to be involved in another way? We are looking for volunteers to participate in the union in other capacities:

- Social media management
- Member mobilizers

For more information about the roles, please email president@cupe3913.on.ca or vpi@cupe3913.on.ca.

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BARGAINING UPDATES

Bargaining began mid-October. This was our first week of bargaining. We've already made some progress, but we are already finding some pullback from the university when demanding work/life balance for students and the importance of setting a meeting between TAs and their supervisor. As the university seems to want to get rid of these, we are pushing to ensure the university requires a work/life balance for students and meetings between TAs and their supervisors.

WHAT WE'VE BEEN DOING TO PREPARE

Your bargaining committee has been hard at work for many months:

- We have been reviewing the responses to the members' bargaining survey we disseminated several months ago so we know exactly what your priorities are.
- We have been reviewing other Collective Agreements in the sector to identify additional items for negotiating.
- We have gone over Unit 1 and 2's current Collective Agreements, looking for improvements
- We have looked over issues and grievances from the life of the current Collective Agreements to help guide proposals.
- We are meeting regularly to develop bargaining points

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Learn more about...

CUPE 3913

We are bargaining a new Collective Agreement on behalf of TAs and Sessional Instructors

We believe that the University is enacting changes that will reduce the quality of education at UofG, and the quality of life of its TAs and Sessionals

The changes we are proposing will help address these issues:

Improving wages and education for all our members

- Tuition reimbursement
- PhD Completion Fund
- Pedagogical training



Improving Job Security for Sessional Instructors

- Improved Right of First Refusal
- Shortlisted for faculty jobs

Expanding health benefits

- More money for mental health issues



Addressing exploitation of International students

- Higher wages to offset high tuition

The graphic above demonstrates the four main focuses of our proposals we are bringing to the table with the university. If you have any questions about bargaining, the proposals we are bringing forth, or how you can get involved, please do not hesitate to contact us!

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CUPE3913 BARGAINING TIMELINE



During the whole bargaining process, we are going to be updating the members through social media, emails, and bargaining blasts that will summarize what went on during the bargaining meeting.

It is our goal to be as **TRANSPARENT** as possible to our members and to ensure members we are doing our best to bargain for a better collective agreement.

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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.

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Learn more about...

APPOINTMENTS FOR SESSIONAL LECTURERS

One candidate may have strengths in one area and another candidate has strength 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**](mailto: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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Get to know YOUR union

SAFIA MAHABUB SAUTY CUPE3913 EQUITY OFFICER



Program: Molecular and Cellular Biology

What is the role of an “Equity Officer”?:

I represent and advocate for the interests of the equity-deserving members. People from equity-deserving groups are more likely to experience and accept unfavourable working conditions. My job is to create awareness among the members and the university, and negotiate terms that specifically address the unique challenges equity-deserving groups face.

WHAT IS ONE THING YOU ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO IN BARGAINING?

Member engagement. We are tabling many proposals addressing several issues our members face. Win or lose, I am looking forward to our members uniting and engaging with our bargaining agenda.

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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 Aug 31
- 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):

- \$600 total for vision and mental health claims

UNIT 2 (Sessional Lecturers):

- Any expense under the Income Tax Act 118.2(2) up to \$1200, 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?



Apply for the Emergency Financial Assistance Fund (EFAF)

Unit 1 members (TAs) experiencing financial hardships may apply for up to \$500 in financial assistance per academic year. To be eligible, you must have had a work assignment within the past year

How do I apply?

- Visit our website at cupe3913.on.ca, login, and under the “my account” tab you can submit an EFAF Claim



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.

www.fordpartner.com



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

Responding to Students in Distress

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND STAFF CONTACT

Executive

President

Scott Duchesne

Vice-President Internal

Alyssa Banaag

Vice-President External

Alexis Fabricius

Unit 1 Steward

Kathleen Nolan

Unit 2 Steward

Kyle Novak

Grievance Officer

Kimber Munford

Health & Safety Officer

Ahmed Mahmood

Equity Officer

Safia Mahabub Sauty

Staff

Labour Relations
Coordinator

Jeff Cornelissen

Admin & Finance
Coordinator

Shelly Sarkisian