

CUPE 3913

Teaching Assistants and Sessional Lecturers at the University of Guelph

A wide-angle photograph of the University of Guelph campus. In the foreground, there are green trees and a paved walkway. In the background, a large, multi-story stone building with a prominent clock tower is visible under a cloudy sky. The word "NEWSLETTER" is overlaid in large white letters, and "JANUARY 2024" is overlaid in smaller white letters to its right.

NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2024

FEATURED TOPICS

What's going on?

- **Welcome back**
- **Winter Tabling Schedule**
- **January Member Mixer and Winter Membership Meeting**
- **What's Your Number?** - as we head into presenting our monetary proposals in bargaining, we want to know how much debt you are collecting semesterly
- **Beginning of Semester Reminders**
- **Members in Good Standing**
- **New Website Launch**
- **Benefits Processing**

Learn more about...

- **Bargaining Updates**
- **Appointments for Sessional Lecturers**
- **Get to Know Your Union: Scott Duchesne, President**
- **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 _____

WELCOME BACK MEMBERS!

CUPE3913 hopes you had a restful and safe holiday break! For this winter semester, we continue to aim to work hard during bargaining and doing the best we can to advocate for our members. There is a lot of work ahead, but we are certain that our preparedness in bargaining has put pressure on the university. Please continue to read the newsletter for important reminders for this coming semester!



WINTER TABLING DATES



Our tabling will continue on in the winter semester! If you have any questions about the union, bargaining, benefits, or any inquiries, come find us in the UC Courtyard during the times of 10:00am-2:00pm on the following dates:

- Wednesday, January 17, 2024
- Wednesday, January 31, 2024
- Wednesday, February 14, 2024
- Wednesday, February 28, 2024
- Wednesday, March 13, 2024
- Wednesday, March 27, 2024

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What's going on

MEMBER MIXER & WINTER MEMBERSHIP MEETING

CUPE3913 is holding a member mixer on January 24th from 5-7pm. This member mixer is for current and new CUPE3913 members! The purpose of this mixer is to get introduced to the union that represents you! All Unit 1 and 2 members are welcome.

Following our member mixer, **CUPE3913 will be holding our Winter Membership Meeting from 7-9pm at UC442.** This membership meeting will discuss the state of the union, committee reports, bargaining, and much more that is listed on the agenda! To be more involved in the union, we encourage you all to attend! If you cannot attend the winter membership meeting, you may attend virtually **<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83697227020>**

For both the member mixer and winter membership meeting, food and drink will be provided. However, you must RSVP to this event so we can get an estimate for our food order!

RSVP Here: <https://forms.gle/qtNYf31EC1KEYeQw6>



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What's going on

WHAT'S YOUR NUMBER?

We already know that between wages and stipends, most grad students still can't afford the basics.

Add up your tuition, rent, groceries, internet, cell phone, transportation, medications, mental/health care, and entertainment costs, and it's likely that you are racking up debt every semester

What is the gap between your stipend and TA pay and your baseline living costs?

CUPE3913 thinks the university should know!

Click the link below!

<https://forms.gle/K2nycpojE2pWUFqc6>



[CUPE3913.ON.CA](https://forms.gle/K2nycpojE2pWUFqc6)

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What's going on

BEGINNING OF THE SEMESTER REMINDERS

Here are a couple of reminders for our Unit 1 members:

- It is required for members to meet with employers to fill out the work agreement before they start their work assignment
- The work agreement should outline all required tasks and hours necessary to complete them
- Please remember to track your hours throughout the semester
- If you have any questions about this, please email Kathleen Nolan, our Unit 1 Steward at unit1@cupe3913.on.ca

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.
- **Unit 1 -** please be reminded to ***submit health claims first to their primary insurance provider*** (CanadaLife through the GSA), and be sure to submit an "explanation of benefits" when submitting your claim to CUPE

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What's going on

BENEFITS PROCESSING

If you submitted your claims after the week of December 11th, please be patient as we will begin to process them within the coming week.



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Learn more about...

BARGAINING UPDATES

We encourage members to keep an eye out on their email for bargaining updates. CUPE3913 is sending bargaining small bargaining blasts with a few insights into the union's negotiations with the university.

FALL 2023 BARGAINING SO FAR

As we near the end of the Fall 2023 semester, our impression is that bargaining is moving along. Currently, we are tackling all non-monetary proposals. Even at this stage, we are still getting push-back from the university on some issues such as **Sessional Job Security**. However, we are still making progress and pushing back to serve our members' best interests.

BARGAINING GOING FORWARD

We are aiming to present the university our monetary proposals in the new year. During this time, we want all members to be engaged and informed so keep an eye out for updates from your union in Winter 2024. Please feel free to contact us at bargaining.committee@cupe3913.on.ca if you have any questions.

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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**.

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



SCOTT DUCHESNE, PRESIDENT

Program/Postition: Sessional Instructor
(Unit 2)

What is the role of the “President”:

I am the chief administrator of the union, and i chair the Executive and Bargaining Committee.

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

I am looking forward to improving the Collective Agreement for all members for a healthy and productive workplace and a positive program experience.

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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