

Don't miss the General Meeting, held November 20 at 4pm, in the Dal SUB !

Be there ! Bring your friends! Some refreshments will be available.

POINTS of Interest

- **Bargaining is imminent for new contracts**
- **President's message**
- **How to apply for a teaching position**
- **CUPE national PSE workers**
- **News from other Universities regarding sessions/contract faculty**



THE INSTRUCTOR

CUPE 3912

General Meeting

TO BE HELD NOVEMBER 20 AT 4PM IN THE DALHOUSIE STUDENT UNION BUILDING ROOM 303

Bargaining for the next Collective Agreements *R. Lanning - Chief Steward*

Bargaining for new Collective Agreements for all three universities will begin in mid-November. Bargaining teams led by our CUPE National Representative, Peter Baxter, will meet over the course of the next months to reach agreements on several areas affecting our work as part-time faculty.

During the course of negotiations we will provide periodic updates on the Local's website (www.3912.cupe.ca). We will provide further details at meetings for each of the bargaining units when negotiations are well underway and if it becomes necessary to hold a strike vote.

We have yet to exchange proposals with the universities. In general our Local is proposing the following:

- clarification of existing Agreement language;
- standardization of faculty evaluations by dept. Chairs or Deans (already existing at MSVU);
- better language to clarify the workloads for Markers and Teaching Assistants at Dalhousie;
- an attempt to limit the arbitrary use of certain Articles by the employer (a situation that occurs most often at MSVU);
- benefits such as retirement, disability (already existing in the SMU Agreement) and child care;
- provisions for part-time faculty conversion to sessional, limited term appointment

- better provisions in cases of course cancellations
- recognition and mitigation of workload issues;
- increases in stipends for both on-site and distance courses.

It is incumbent on members to assist the bargaining teams by monitoring website updates, attend meetings and demonstrate support for your Bargaining Teams.

Bargaining Teams for each of the universities are as follows:

Dalhousie: Mike Earle, Carmel Forde, Christina Behme, Robert Lanning.

SMU: Steve Cloutier, Barb Moore, Nick Murray, Robert Lanning.

MSVU: Jennifer Dimoff, Barb Moore, Robert Lanning.



Some bargaining issues already addressed R. Lanning

Some comments from members responding to bargaining priorities survey are addressed here:

There was interest in having funds for research, conferences, and professional development. **If teaching at MSVU, see Article 17.5 of the Collective Agreement; for SMU, see article 24.06, and for Dal, see Article 18.5. None of these includes research. We will try to get increases in these amounts during bargaining.** Some lab instructors want the full stipend for their Lab instruction.

At MSVU's last negotiations we attempted to raise the stipend to the full amount . We

argued it was unfair to pay full time faculty double that given to part-time faculty. But when it came to voting on the proposed contract only *2* Lab instructors voted. When full-time faculty negotiated their new agreement, they agreed that their members would receive only 1/2 the stipend for labs. This is a lesson on low turn-outs to vote on proposed contracts, General Meetings, strike votes, etc. Power in numbers is not meaningless.

Members teaching distance courses want some remuneration for workspace at home.

This is an issue addressed by Revenue Canada: see "workspace-in-the-home-

expenses" <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/ndvdl/tpcs/ncm-tx/rm/cmptng/ddctns/1ns206-236/229/slry/wrkspc-eng.html>

The employer has to attest to the facts of home office space for tax purposes. Anyone having difficulty getting the employer to sign should contact the Union.

Some concerns were raised about having to store old exams in members' homes.

Take the exams to the department secretary. They are the university's property and therefore, the university's problem.

Personal harassment is an issue for some members. **At MSVU see Article 11; at SMU see Article 4; at Dal, Article 4. Every employer is governed by the *Nova Scotia Human Rights act*. Harassment is more difficult to address than discrimination. The act can be used in some harassment cases. Any member who believes he or she is subject to harassment should contact the union; we have means and experience addressing such issues and additional resources to assist us at CUPE.**



Hi! My name is Jennifer Dimoff and I am your new CUPE VP at MSVU. I have been teaching for the Department of Religious Studies/Philosophy at MSVU since 1999. If you have any questions at any time concerning your rights or understanding of the Collective Agreement please don't hesitate to contact me. I can be found most days in Seton 452A or you can contact me at

How to apply for teaching positions

For the majority of the members of CUPE 3912, getting work is not usually a problem – a teaching position is posted, we apply based on our qualifications and our precedence. Over the years we have been unionized, we have had relatively few problems with members being awarded positions, given the thousands of postings awarded to our members.

However, some members have had their qualifications, areas of expertise and experience disputed by Chairs and by Deans. While the vast majority of these issues have arisen at Mount Saint Vincent, some advice for all 3912 members seems appropriate for at least a couple of reasons.

First, many members with long histories of teaching rely on the institutional culture within a department; they are well-known by Chairs and other full-time faculty and a short note of application and a simple resume is a reminder of their long service, and that has sufficed for obtaining teaching positions. Some members may have successfully been using such an approach for years. But when personnel change, a personality conflict arises, someone knows a recent Ph.D. grad who needs part-time work, difficulties may arise.

Thus, secondly, labour arbitration decisions clearly show that the onus is on the applicant to detail all qualifications and demonstrate, to the extent possible on a cv, that they are capable of

R. Lanning Chief Steward

performing the work in the job posting. If the applicant's qualifications are not clearly spelled out on the cv and/or the letter of application, the employer is under no obligation to request further information regardless of precedence.

Hence, create a standard cv for all applications. The notion that cv's should be constructed for each job for which a person applies means that some emphases will be absent in some application packages.

Addressing the needs of a specific job posting should be done comprehensively in the letter of application.

Provide a list of previous courses taught at a particular university with course numbers, year and term of the teaching.

Leave nothing for the employer to assume.

If members are applying for more than one course at a time, prioritize the courses: first preference, second preference, and so on.

Once contracts have been issued, the employer is under no obligation to return to the pool of applicants to assign courses differently because a senior applicant has decided he or she would rather have had another course.

CUPE and the Post Secondary Sector

J. Dimoff VP MSVU

CUPE performs an important function in defending post-secondary education. With dwindling support from government and the increasing privatization of education, there is no better time than now to become actively involved in CUPE's PSE sector. At the recent CUPE 2009 National Convention in Montreal in October, I attended a meeting of Post-Secondary Education Workers. This was my first National Convention and first time attending this sector's meeting. I was pleased to discover a very active community of CUPE PSE workers in this country. A major topic of discussion was about P3s (public-private partnerships).

John Malcolmson (CUPE BC) explained how these corporate strategic partnerships are never a good idea because they result

How is this seen on university campuses? For example, through exclusive agreements with corporate food distributors (Coke products including bottled water). Then the downward spiral occurs... Water fountains don't get repaired or maintained forcing students to purchase bottled water. UBC has been very aggressive in pursuing this partnership and the process has been shrouded in secrecy. Not a very democratic process.

Increasingly in this country, universities are entering into these ventures. This is not only is this a threat to education but the threat to PSE CUPE members is powerful. There is a growing awareness among our sector of the need to network with other PSE workers. In 2006 there was a summit meeting of PSE workers. Outcomes of this meeting concern the need for coordinated

bargaining, the need for cooperative organization and the need to take a stand against the increased privatization of Post-secondary education. During the sectoral meeting at the National Convention it was reaffirmed that more work needs to be done. Nationally we need to work together to protect education and workers rights.

In the National Contracting Out and Privatization Coordinating Committee's Report they state "Contracting out and P3s are still a real threat from municipalities, school boards, universities, libraries and health care facilities. Essential services legislation that would take away the right to strike for some public sector workers is being explored in some provinces. Meanwhile, the federal and provincial governments are keeping the pressure on to sell off public services."

A press release on CUPE National's website states:
CUPE supports increased federal and provincial funding to public universities and colleges. Universities need to be a good place for learning and working with decent wages and conditions of employment.
CUPE supports a freeze on tuition fees with a view to rolling back tuition fees. We see education as an investment and benefit to all Canadians. The grants program must be revamped and a system of needs-based grants developed to be available to any student in need.
CUPE opposes the massive federal cuts to postsecondary institutions, which has forced universities and colleges to court the private sector as a source of funding

To read more on P3s check out the info on CUPE Nova Scotia's website:

www.p3facts.ca

President's Message continued

Finally, I'm excited to tell you that we now have a new office in the Killam Library on the third floor in Room 3618 where our office manager Renee Danker works on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 8:30-1:30. You can also leave phone messages which are checked regularly by Renee at 902 494-8872.

Our office is a bit larger than what we had previously and it

has been decorated in CUPE colours to provide an inviting decor. Most importantly, your Executive members now have space to hold meetings in our own office, which is a big improvement, and we have lots of storage space just outside our office. You are cordially invited to come by during

Renee's work hours to view our new Local 3912 home, to pick up a CUPE constitution or to look over our little library of progressive publications.

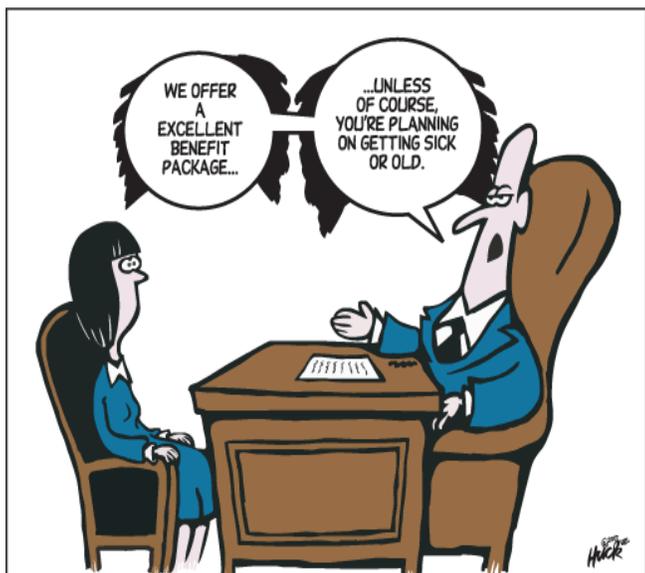
Respectfully,
 Barbara Moore, President,
 CUPE 3912

General Meeting

subsidized child care is available –see the President's message on back page.

SUPPORT YOUR BARGAINING

TEAMS!! Read the article on bargaining, page 1.



Barb Moore,
CUPE 3912
President, speak-
ing at CUPE Na-
tional Conven-
tion, October
2009, on repre-
sentation in our
sector.



President's Message

Hello Sisters and Brothers,

As our CUPE Local 3912 Executive and bargaining committees prepare to begin bargaining on our fifth collective agreement at Dalhousie, St. Mary's and Mount St. Vincent Universities, I take this opportunity to ask the membership to become more involved with your Local union. The Executive and bargaining committees spend many hours on your behalf to negotiate the absolutely best collective agreement that we can achieve. Since the recession began last year, many of you have heard in the media the tired old song that workers must be willing to give concessions to our employers. We disagree. Workers did not cause the recession and it should not be the workers who pay for the outrageous greed of the corporate sector in our economy. Although we have made excellent wage gains in past bargaining, it is still obvious that the Universities in Halifax and indeed, across Canada, exploit our labour at bargain basement wages and we still do not have even basic benefits and pensions which even the poorest paid support workers and physical plant workers do enjoy at our Universities.

We are pleased to report that at Dalhousie and Saint Mary's, while there have been some grievances filed, we have done our best to work with those Universities to problem solve before we have to enter arbitration. Making sure that our employers follow the collective agreements which they have entered into with us is the continuing core of our work. Unfortunately, over the last four years at Mount St. Vincent University, we have been forced to file over 15 grievances

and advance *seven* of those complaints to arbitration which has meant tons of work time for our grievance officer and stewards as well as money we were forced to put into the arbitration cases. On a brighter note, a recent meeting was held with the new Acting President at MSVU, Dr. Alexa McDonough to advise her of the problems we have had over the last four years and I am optimistic that we may find a new level of cooperation with MSVU. While bargaining begins in November, we will be asking our Vice Presidents at each university to form committees and phone trees dedicated to strike aversion. A well organized team on each campus will show strength to our employers and in the case that we do require a strike vote, we hope to be ready to proceed with that in a timely fashion. We need each and every one of you to get involved and be a part of that process. If you can give a few hours of work to the Local to phone or organize your department, we need you to contact our office or the Vice Presidents at your University as soon as you can. Their contact information can be found here: <http://www.3912.cupe.ca>. A Union is only as good as the members make it and we really need your involvement to provide the absolutely best collective agreement we can to the membership. In other areas of The Instructor, you will find an announcement of our upcoming General Meeting to be held 20 November at Dalhousie Student Union Building. We hope you can all attend to hear updates on bargaining and to give your voice and support to our bargaining committees. For those of you who find attending our general meetings difficult due to child care needs, we are prepared to offer \$25.00 towards childcare for all members who need this service upon receiving a receipted form from your childcare provider. Forms to have the childcare provider sign will be available at the general meeting and we will promptly refund members needing childcare upon receiving the form which you can mail in or drop off at our Dalhousie office.

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