



THE INSTRUCTOR

Fall 2017

Welcome

Hello CUPE 3912 members!

What a busy time of year for CUPE 3912! After a successful family picnic in June and a new volunteer appreciation event in August, we have lots of events lined up for this fall.

In October, we have the **Meet and Greet**s at each of the universities – an opportunity for you to get to know your fellow members. As well, we have activities associated with the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT). I and a few other members will be attending the **Contract Academic Staff Conference** in Toronto. Right after I return is **Fair Employment Week**. I hope you will join our **round-table discussions** on “Research and Supervision” on Oct. 25 and on “Job Security and a Living Wage” on Oct. 26, moderated by myself and Julie Quinn, respectively.

I hope to see you at our next **General Meeting** on Nov. 3.

And please, please, please fill out the **CAUT national survey**; it is so important that our voices get heard. I helped with a few of the survey questions and I am eager to see the results.

As always thanks to the Education & Newsletter Committee (Communications team) – Marcia Ozier, Julie Quinn and Bonita Squires – the executive, the negotiations teams and all our volunteers!

Karen Harper, your Communications Officer

General Meeting

Who? CUPE 3912 members

When? Friday, Nov. 3rd, 2pm

Where? SMU - Loyola Bldg, Private Dining Rm

Refreshments will be served



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Meet & Greet

Dal

Oct. 17, 2:30 - 4:30pm

University Club

Dal AG

Oct. 20, 2 - 4pm

Riverview

MSVU

Oct. 27, 12 - 2:30pm

Vinnie's

SMU

Oct. 19, 2 - 4pm

Loyola Dining Room

Refreshments will be served

Bargaining Update!

Steve Cloutier, CUPE 3912 President

Mount Saint Vincent University

CUPE 3912 ratified the new collective agreement with MSVU in two voting sessions (Sept 25 and 28). Now that our membership has ratified the agreement, the university's board of governors will vote to ratify the agreement. Once the board ratifies the agreement, the union and the university will produce a new collective agreement (checking for typos, etc.). Once that is done, there will be an official signing where the university president and I, as CUPE president, will sign the collective agreement. The agreement then becomes official and all changes take effect. Those members entitled to retroactive back pay will receive it about a month later,



depending on where in the pay period the signing takes place.

Dalhousie University

We continue to have negotiations with Dalhousie. We have not yet discussed financial issues as we are working on some language proposals that will improve working conditions for members and incorporate the new members at the former Agricultural College at Truro.

Saint Mary's University

Negotiations with SMU have not yet started. The union is ready and we have our proposals ready to go. We are just waiting to hear back from the university about dates.

Especially for Scientists

Advocacy for Fundamental Research

The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) started a campaign calling on the Canadian government to implement the full recommendations of the April 2017 Report of the Advisory Panel on Federal Support for Fundamental Science. Chaired by Dr. David Naylor, this report provides a comprehensive analysis of the state of Canadian research funding and offers clear direction for the way forward. Among its central conclusions is that federal spending in support of research has fallen behind that of peer nations since the early 2000s; and federal research funding has increasingly favoured targeted priority-driven research at the expense of investigator-led



projects. These patterns have particularly disadvantaged women and minoritized scholars, early career researchers, and social scientists and humanists.

The report's key recommendation is that the Canadian government **increase funding for investigator-led research by \$1.3 billion over 4 years**. CAUT is asking members of its associations to sign and share its online petition and to contact your MP urging them to advocate for basic research in this country by supporting the implementation of the Naylor Report recommendations.

Website: <http://science.caut.ca/> for more details and to **sign the petition**.

*** Slogan/Mascot Contest!!! ***

The executive has discussed the idea of making swag or t-shirts, mugs etc. for CUPE 3912. However, 'CUPE 3912' is not very descriptive and



'the union representing all part-time faculty employed at Dalhousie, Saint Mary's and Mount Saint Vincent Universities, teaching assistants employed at Dalhousie University and Teaching English as a Second Language Instructors at SMU'

is a bit cumbersome to put on a t-shirt or mug....

So we're having a contest to ask you for ideas for a **slogan and/or a mascot** to represent CUPE 3912!



Email your suggestions for a slogan or mascot for CUPE 3912 to: Karen Harper, communications.cupe3912@gmail.com by **November 3rd**.

The executive will select the submissions that best represent CUPE 3912 then will present the options to the membership for a **vote**.

Prizes to be determined but may include swag with your slogan or mascot.

National Survey on Contract Academic Staff

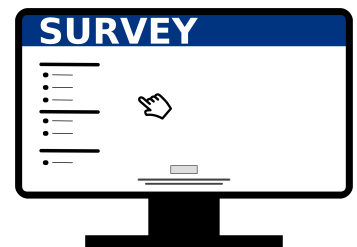
Part-Time Instructors -- Please Participate!!!

The Canadian Association of University Teachers is undertaking the first ever **national study on the experiences of Contract Academic Staff (CAS)**. The research is led by Dr. Karen Foster, Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at Dalhousie University.

The survey will collect much needed data on the experiences of our growing academic workforce. While participation is entirely voluntary, your full participation will ensure that as many CAS as possible are included in this critical study. The survey is open to all

our members who taught in the 2016-2017 academic year as part-time instructors.

The survey should take approximately 30 minutes to complete and will be open until November 1, 2017.



Website:

<https://caut.limequery.org/151696?lang=en>

Contact if you have questions:

Karen.Foster@dal.a

Meet our new Faculty Liaison - David Banoub

I am part-time instructor in political science, Canadian studies, and history, and I teach at Dalhousie, Saint Mary's, and Mount Saint Vincent. My BA is from Memorial University, and my MA and PhD are both from Carleton University. My PhD was in history, with a specialization in political economy. My academic work studies patronage, civil service reforms, and how public workers have represented themselves politically and culturally. This project was shaped by my commitment to



workplace democracy, and interest in workers' rights and issues. I have been a proud CUPE member since 2005. While at Carleton, I was also involved with the Graduate Student Association while the TA union was negotiating a collective agreement, which further entrenched my belief in labour organizing. As the part-time faculty liaison, I am excited to share information and news between the members and the executive, and I look forward to meeting more of my colleagues throughout the region.

David Banoub

Fair Employment Week - Oct. 23rd to 27th

Hi folks!

Fair Employment Week is coming to a campus near you from Oct. 23 - Oct. 27. "Fair Employment Week" is part of a CAUT-sponsored initiative called "**Make It Fair**". The premise of this initiative is that the tenuous and often stressful nature of part-time academic work leads not only to unfair working conditions for those academics living and working in part-time purgatory, but it also has serious implications for the quality and integrity of our post-secondary education in general. In order to address these concerns we need to work together to improve the job security and working conditions of contract faculty.

To find out more about "**Fair Employment Week**" and the "**Make It Fair**" initiative, check out <http://makeitfair.caut.ca/>. Here you can pledge your support for this worthy

cause and also fill out the CAUT Survey of Contract Academic Staff to extend our knowledge and make us stronger.

What are we doing for Fair Employment Week?

We are pleased to announce that we have planned two round-table discussions around the theme – "**Voices for Change: Share our stories to inform future action**"

- **Research and Supervision** – 5:30 pm, Wed. Oct 25th in Loyola 271
- **Job Security and a Living Wage** – 5:30 pm, Thurs. Oct. 26 in the Loyola Private Dining Room

Please plan to come out and attend one or both of these discussions – because your voice is important.

Julie Quinn
Newsletter & Education Committee

On Precedence

Carmel Forde, CUPE 3912 Vice President

Contract faculty accrue precedence at each university separately. Precedence is akin to “seniority”, and is treated as such at each of the universities: Dalhousie, SMU, and MSVU.

Acquiring precedence

Precedence is not automatic. At each university there is a probationary period, often a period of approximately two years, during which an instructor must teach at least several courses successfully, and then one might acquire precedence at that university. However, if, for example, one teaches at Dalhousie every year, but only 1 class (.3) at the same time of year, precedence cannot be acquired, as there will be insufficient courses within two years.

Precedence is a status and once acquired, it provides the possibility of challenging unjust applications of hiring practices.

Precedence is held throughout the university in which it is acquired, meaning that it is not limited to the department in which one most frequently teaches. It does not apply across universities, however. An instructor with 20 points at MSVU may have only 2 points at Dalhousie, and none at SMU.

Each university has separate requirements for establishing precedence for a member. Let’s take Dalhousie: in the case of Dalhousie’s precedence requirements, an instructor may be hired to teach a course (or two courses) during a specific term. If one teaches only two classes over that period, one is not in a position to acquire precedence. Procedures governing precedence differ at each institution, so

members should always check their institution’s collective agreement first.

The department in question (and the human resources personnel) tracks the work done by a specific instructor, and if a department chooses to hire a person for three courses over a period of two years, then that person becomes an instructor with precedence. At each of the three universities there is a graduated rate of pay that correlates to the amount of precedence points one accrues over the years of teaching assignments, until one reaches the cap for that scale. Qualifications may override precedence in determining hiring only when two members have equal precedence.

At Truro Campus

Recently, at the Truro campus, part-time faculty acquired formal collective agreements through which they will begin to acquire precedence. Because no seniority was formally tracked through the years an instructor may have taught, there has been a recognition of length of service for some faculty (that is, they may receive an incrementally higher rate of pay than a new instructor). But without a collective agreement in place, there was no requirement that Dalhousie track the seniority of instructors, and track precedence points. Some instructors from Truro may now have accrued a place on the precedence lists for that campus. The requirements for precedence at Truro campus are identical to those at the Halifax campus: 3 courses over two years.

Monitoring precedence lists

In recent years at all of our institutions, there have been cases where precedence lists have been ignored, avoided, or contested unjustly. In each case we have challenged such actions, and we have been successful, because precedence is a primary consideration in hiring contract faculty.

If you are a member of CUPE 3912 you should check and confirm precedence point on the lists at CUPE 3912 each year as a matter of course, to ensure that the departments in which you teach are noting these points after a course assignment. Every member should also pay close attention to postings and hirings of CUPE members that occur in their workplaces to confirm that each hiring respects precedence, since it is a cornerstone of the rights we have.

Can a member lose precedence?

The universities can remove members from the precedence lists with proper justification. In the past we have seen grievances arise from this action. As an example, some years ago at MSVU two members were removed from the list as a result of claims of unsatisfactory overall performance by the chair of their departments. If a member is removed from a precedence list, they are in effect dismissed since once their precedence points are lost, the applicant has no seniority.

The Union challenged the use of the chair's evaluation form in a grievance, and showed that there were no consistent interpretations of categories of meaning (at that time, in the evaluation form). There can be quite inconsistent uses made of such forms, and each time we are in bargaining for new collective agreements, we review and re-evaluate such forms – this is again a part of our bargaining at the local universities.

The executive committee also reviews the collective agreements at each university to see how we may recognize long service in other ways. Since many of our members teach far beyond the points needed for the top rate of pay, there is no increase for some of our members for years and years of work. This is a concern for our executive, and we are working to see how we can remedy this in new agreements.

Does a TA acquire precedence?

Teaching assistants at Dalhousie (only) hold *priority* for teaching in a course, once they have taught it. However, such priority only lasts for a year beyond the first year of assisting in a course. Teaching assistants do not acquire precedence points. With every new collective agreement we try to improve the situation for our TAs.

When does precedence cease?

Finally, even if you are not teaching at a university one year, and return after one or two years, your precedence points do not disappear in the interim. At all universities we have bargained that precedence remains in place for 3 years even after you have completed your last teaching assignment. This includes the right to a library card for that period. This agreement lasts only for three years past your final teaching assignment, so should you fail to return to the institution after those 3 years, your previously accrued precedence points cannot be retrieved and applied at a later date. If you are rehired, you may begin to accrue precedence points once again.

In solidarity,
Carmel Forde

VP CUPE 3912, Dalhousie

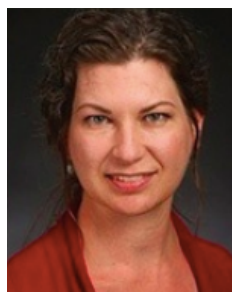
Congratulations on Teaching Awards!!!

Congratulations to our members **Jennifer Grek Martin**, **David Beitelman** and **Sarah Greening** for their teaching awards from Dalhousie University!

Find this announcement online at **Dal News**, **June 15th**. Please let **communications.cupe3912@gmail.com** know of any other awards to share in the newsletter.

Contract and Limited-Term Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching

Jennifer Grek Martin
School of Information Management



A lecturer in the School of Information Management, Jennifer Grek Martin is receiving Dal's award celebrating teaching from contract and limited-term faculty.

The selection committee was impressed by Dr. Martin's breadth of teaching experience with positive student and peer feedback, as well as her commitment with curriculum design and creative learning. "In a short period of time," the committee writes, "[Grek Martin has] built an outstanding portfolio and has demonstrated evidence of leadership beyond the expectations of contract and limited-term faculty."

President's Graduate Student Teaching Award



David Beitelman

Department of Political Science



Sarah Greening

Department of Chemistry

PhD candidates David Beitelman and Sarah Greening are each receiving the university's award for graduate student teaching.

Beitelman, from the Department of Political Science, impressed the selection committee with how his students have benefitted from his unique ideas, entertaining professional lectures, pedagogical innovation and great efforts to support students expressing their individual views.

Greening, from the Department of Chemistry, was cited for her innovative lab teaching efforts for students of diverse backgrounds, as well as her exemplary leadership and role as a volunteer in the community.

Breaking News

Check out the **new film about contract academic staff** by Garry Potter and Stephen Svenson (which is different than the upcoming film by Gerry Potter, who interviewed some of us this past summer!).

Find it at https://youtu.be/yOB_vUF5Dic



Grieving Dalhousie's Respect for TAs and Markers

Cameron Ells

Dalhousie University's annual Respect Week (September 25 – 29, 2017) is an opportunity to reflect on the institution's commitment to respectful practices, environments, and communities. Bullying is unacceptable, whether it be on campus, online, at home, or in the workplace. Bullying and disrespectful practices – recognized or not - are unacceptable, whether they originate from students, visitors, staff, employers, or from the university itself.

There has been a failing grade, in Dalhousie's respect for its legal commitments, responsibilities, and working conditions, for some Teaching Assistant and Marker employees.

On September 28, my Pink Day included wearing the proudly pink button of CUPE 3912, the union representing Dalhousie University Teaching Assistants and Markers, at all campuses.

Included in the signed, legal, enforceable, collective agreement between Dalhousie University and CUPE 3912, are the hourly rates of pay for services provided by Teaching Assistants and Markers. Those who receive payment from Dalhousie University for providing such services, are automatically represented by CUPE 3912, whether they know it or not.

I started providing such services, and receiving payment from Dalhousie University, without knowing about CUPE 3912; without knowing about the Dalhousie University – CUPE 3912 collective agreement; and without knowing that I was automatically

represented by CUPE 3912. I was not alone in having this experience.

A copy of the collective agreement is publicly available on the CUPE 3912 website. Appendix C is the Teaching Assistants Duties Form. Collective bargaining is underway to negotiate the next version of this agreement.

“On September 28, my Pink Day included wearing the proudly pink button of CUPE 3912”

Teaching Assistants and Markers are hourly employees of Dalhousie University, represented by CUPE 3912. They are not independent contractors

who receive an “all included” payment (e.g. for painting a house), regardless of if bad weather meant it took more time than expected to do the job, or the deck had to be done twice.

Teaching Assistants and Markers are hourly employees of Dalhousie University, represented by CUPE 3912. They are not vegetable or fruit vendors at a farmer's market, selling the academic equivalent of apples; and who may sometimes choose – for a limited time only - to sell ten of their apples, at a special sale price equivalent of seven apples.

Teaching Assistants and Markers are hourly employees of Dalhousie University, represented by CUPE 3912. The Teaching Assistant Duties Form, when filled out and signed, is specific for each individual course. It is to be signed by the Instructor of Record for a specific course, and by the Teaching Assistant agreeing to provide specific services. Signed copies are also kept on

record with Dalhousie University. The various services are to be identified (e.g. preparation, in-class, office, marking, and others) along with the corresponding number of working hours for which payment will be made, at the applicable hourly rate.

Using the Teaching Assistant Duties Form, as intended and as required under the legal collective agreement, can demonstrate that both the Instructor Supervisors and Teaching Assistants have a clear and consistent understanding of workload expectations.

There have been Teaching Assistants and Markers, in more than one faculty, on more than one campus, that have provided services without the intended and required use of these forms. There have been Dalhousie University Teaching Assistants and Markers who experienced working additional hours than expected, without receiving additional payment at the hourly rate.

In June 2017, CUPE 3912 met with Dalhousie University and discussed this circumstance. Later that month, the university sent a memo to all departments that these Teaching Assistant Duty Forms are to be filled out for every Teaching Assistant assignment. This applies to Markers as well, as both

Teaching Assistants and Markers are employees. The memo stated in part:

“Under Article 17.1(c) of the Collective Agreement, the University is required to do the following:

- 1. Prior to the beginning, or within the first fourteen (14) days of the start of the assignment, the Supervisor shall*

meet with Teaching Assistants, individually or as a group, to discuss the duties to be completed and the anticipated hours.

- 2. An outline of the duties and the anticipated hours shall be confirmed on the Teaching Assistant Duties Form in Appendix “C” and shall be signed by the Teaching Assistant and the Supervisor who shall each retain a copy and one copy shall be retained by the Department.*

Moving forward, we’re asking all Department Administrators to track these forms to ensure that supervisors are completing them in compliance with the Collective Agreement. Payroll requests will not be processed without a completed TA duties form.

Please also review departmental files for active TA assignments and note which ones do not have a signed TA duty form on file. If gaps exist, we will need to remedy these immediately.”

There is a fine old Russian expression: Trust, but Verify. It was often used when agreements to reduce nuclear weapons were being negotiated and executed.

“There is a fine old Russian expression: ***Trust, but Verify.***”

Dalhousie University may - or may not - have the institutional interest to consistently

respect the letter and intent of their legal agreement with Teaching Assistants and Markers.

We can start by trusting in the good intent of the Dalhousie senior manager writing that memo, to consistently have signed Instructor – Teaching Assistant agreements; but also use objective, evidence based testing of that intent, to verify what happens.

Circumstances can vary between departments, but there is an overall Dalhousie University responsibility to respect the collective agreement about the working conditions of their Teaching Assistant and Marker employees.

Dalhousie University has a demonstrated institutional interest to consistently respect the tuition payment it receives from students, for the provision of educational and other services.



Dalhousie University failed to have signed agreements consistently made between Instructor Supervisors and Teaching Assistants, for each applicable course, as per the legal requirements of their collective agreement with CUPE 3912. It is a failing grade, in Dalhousie's respect for its legal commitments, responsibilities, and working conditions, for some Teaching Assistant and Marker employees.

In June 2017, following discussions with CUPE 3912, Dalhousie University management acted with the intent of correcting this circumstance. It is uncertain if they can yet demonstrate that their desired results are being achieved.

How are they doing? Let us know.

Are there Teaching Assistants and Markers providing services without having signed an

agreement with their Instructor Supervisors? Are they receiving payment for these services? Are there clear expectations about the services and hours for which Teaching Assistants and Markers are to be paid? There should not be any "mission creep."

We are working for a better and more consistently respectful work environment for our Teaching Assistants and Markers; one where both the Instructor Supervisors and Teaching Assistants have a clear and consistent understanding of workload expectations.

Dalhousie University is a great place, but there is room for improvement. Organized representation of Teaching Assistants, Markers and others, results in better communications with this University, compared to other institutions. The communications between CUPE 3912 and Dalhousie University, on this and other matters, benefits all.

How are things? Please contact CUPE 3912 with any feedback, stories, or concerns.

Join us on Tuesday October 17, 2017, between 2:30 – 4:30 pm for a **"Meet and Greet"** event with CUPE 3912 at the University Club (1 Alumni Crescent Halifax, NS, B3H 4R2). All are welcome - Instructors, Teaching Assistants, Markers, Lab Demonstrators, and interested others, from any university campus.

Cameron Ells, P.Eng.

CUPE 3912 VP Dalhousie Sexton Campus,
Teaching Assistants and Markers

Opportunities for Members

There are opportunities for teaching development throughout the academic year at all three universities.

SMU

A new "*community of practice*" on the theme of "*Exploring Innovations in University Teaching and Learning*"

Contact William.Kay@smu.ca to sign up.

<http://www.smu.ca/academics/studio/communities-of-practice.html>.

MSVU

There is a *Teaching Showcase* on Oct. 14.

http://www.msvu.ca/en/home/community/tlc/Teaching_and_Learning/TeachingShowcase2017/default.aspx.

Dal

Go to www.dal.ca/dept/clt.html for opportunities at Dalhousie including the *Lunch and Learn Series* and *Studio Courses* (bottom right corner of the webpage).

Other

A labour-related opportunity is the Halifax Labour Council's annual *Troublemakers Conference* in October.

If you are interested in finding out more or attending any of these events or others, please contact Karen Harper at communications.cupe3912@gmail.com

Your CUPE 3912 Executive

Last spring, your CUPE 3912 executive were voted into their current positions.

Below is a reminder of who's who and where!

President	Steve Cloutier
Secretary Treasurer	Steph Bland
Recording Secretary	Tatiana Rossolimo
VP SMU	Phil Bennett
VP MSVU	<i>Unfilled</i>
VP Dalhousie Part Time Instructors	Carmel Forde
VP Dalhousie TAs Sexton campus	Cameron Ells
VP Dalhousie TAs Studley campus	Erik Nelson
Communications Officer	Karen Harper
Sergeant-at-Arms	B. Hattie-Longmire
Trustee, 3 years	A. El Nabbout
St. Mary's Language Centre Representative	Rory Leitch
Representative for Truro Campus	Daryl Hayes

Did You Know?

Each CUPE 3912 VP handles

**~2 to 8
grievances / year**

Newsletter Editors:

Karen Harper & Bonita Squires

Questions, comments or suggestions?

communications.cupe3912@gmail.com

CUPE 3912 Family Picnic - June 10th



Labour Day Family Picnic - September 4th



Who are the ~3,000 members of CUPE local 3912?

- Part-time faculty at Dalhousie, Saint Mary's and Mount Saint Vincent Universities, including clinical instructors and lab demonstrators
- Teaching assistants and markers/demonstrators at Dalhousie University
- Instructors at the TESL Centre at Saint Mary's University

CUPE 3912

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