

Weekly updates in reverse chronological order
Karen Harper, CUPE 3912 president 2019-2022

Aug. 12, 2022

Hi everyone. One last email. This is mostly to announce a GM on Monday and to thank executive members who have resigned. I also want to thank you for all the supportive and appreciative replies I received from my resignation email. They really mean so much to me. You, the members, mean so much to me.

- **Thanks Carmel, Allan and Hari** for all your work for CUPE 3912! Allan and Hari have been very helpful on the Dal bargaining team. I want to especially thank Carmel Forde, who has worked for the CUPE 3912 executive in various capacities for 17 years! Her assistance and support have been invaluable to me the past few years as president. She has been really dedicated to helping members. I hope you will join me in thanking Carmel for her long service to our local.
- We are looking for a **new President and new VPs for Dalhousie Part-time Instructors, Truro and TAs, Markers and Demonstrators at Sexton**. Although you can be nominated at the meeting on Friday, if you are interested I strongly encourage you to contact Dave beforehand. Note that at the time of nominations, if you are not present (e.g., if your internet is not working) you will still be considered for the position only if you have emailed Dave beforehand that you accept the nomination. Nominations are encouraged from marginalized groups, including but not limited to Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) peoples; BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) members; members with disabilities; in addition to MAGes (Marginalized Genders) and LGBTQIA2S+ members.
- There will be a **special General Meeting for the by-elections for these positions on Monday at 7 pm**. It will probably be online or hybrid so make sure to RSVP to Kim (our membership officer) to receive the zoom invite if attending online.
- **Bargaining update:** This week we have been bargaining at the Mount. Due to changes in both the union and employer teams, this has been another reset meeting where we have looked over all outstanding proposals to see where we're at. We set a few more dates in September for the Mount but don't have any dates set for SMU or Dal.

Take care everyone and good luck!

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Make It Fair!

Aug. 8, 2022

This email is to announce my resignation as CUPE 3912 president, effective Aug. 13, 2022.

I am resigning because at recent GMs it has become obvious that a group of members has steered this local into a direction that undermines my leadership with unauthorized emails, a campaign of misinformation and division of the executive and the local itself at a crucial time in bargaining time when unity and solidarity matters more than ever. This comes on top of months of personal harassment, intimidation and bullying towards myself and other members of the executive.

I really wanted to stay on as president until the end of bargaining. I did not want to leave this position in a toxic work environment but unfortunately I cannot continue with these working conditions.

I like ending on a good note and although I could not end my leadership of this local this way, at least I can have a positive closure to my president's emails.

THANK-YOU to all of you who gave me so much support and appreciation over the last 3+ years. It was such a challenge in so many ways – bargaining for 4 bargaining units, difficult grievances and this pandemic thing – and I only survived with your support. I especially thank all of you who sent me emails of appreciation, even if it was a simple thanks. You all work so hard and deserve so much more. Good luck and take care of yourselves.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Make It Fair!

Aug. 2, 2022

Happy Summer! There has been so much going on that it has been difficult to find time to write this update. Most ongoing issues relate to Dalhousie bargaining and strike preparation but I'll try to be clear what is relevant to everyone and what is university specific. General Meetings (such as the one on Friday) are always for all CUPE 3912 members but the meeting on Wednesday evening on strike planning is for Dalhousie members.

- Wednesday Aug. 3 at 7 pm: **Dalhousie strike preparation** (Dal members, rsvp Dave)
- Friday Aug. 5 at 3 pm: **Special General Meeting** (all members, rsvp Kim)
- The meeting on Wednesday for **Dalhousie strike preparation** will be more of a workshop than a meeting. It is intended for volunteers interested in helping with strike preparations at Dalhousie to work on a strike plan.
- **Thanks Fallen** for all your work for CUPE 3912! Fallen was especially effective at reaching out to members, including TAs and markers who were international students or in marginalized groups.
- We are looking for a **new VP for TAs, markers and demonstrators at Dalhousie Studley campus!** Although you can be nominated at the meeting on Friday, if you are interested I strongly encourage you to contact me beforehand. I can also tell you more about the position. Note that at the time of nominations, if you are not present (e.g., if your internet is not working) you will still be considered for the position only if you have emailed me beforehand that you accept the nomination. We encourage nominations from marginalized groups, including but not limited to Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) peoples; BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) members; members with disabilities; in addition to MAGes (Marginalized Genders) and LGBTQIA2S+ members.
- We will hold a **special General Meeting for a by-election** for the VP for TAs, markers and demonstrators at Dalhousie Studley campus; discussion of Dalhousie strike preparations; elections of members to committees; and approval of audits. It will take place at 3 pm on Aug. 5 at a room in SUB on Dalhousie campus (check reminder emails for the room number). It will probably be hybrid so make sure to RSVP to Kim (our membership officer) to receive the zoom invite if attending online.

- At the GM, members will be **elected to committees**. Elections to a Dalhousie Strike Committee or Team will be discussed at Wednesday's meeting. If you are interested in volunteering, I highly recommend that you attend both meetings.
- We also have vacancies for CUPE 3912 representation on **university committees at the Mount**. This includes the CUPE 3912 – employer Joint Committee, and may also include a harassment committee and an equity committee. (I am hoping to confirm this by Friday.) Thank-you Nicholous Deal for your help on the Joint Committee!
- Dalhousie invites any Dalhousie part-time academics to its **New Academic Staff Orientation**. This will be an online event during the week of August 15-19. On Monday the 15th, a Brightspace site will be opened to those who are enrolled with several modules full of information they can browse and there will be "live" synchronous sessions Tuesday-Friday. If you are interested, send an email to clt@dal.ca. Here's a link to a description and the schedule: <https://www.dal.ca/dept/clt/events-news/annual-events/NASO.html>
- From CUPE National: CUPE's National Sector Council Conference, "Fighting Austerity, Inflation, and Privatization." will take place October 3 to 6, 2022 in Ottawa. Join CUPE members from across the country to share information about work in your sectors and to gain new insights from exciting guest speakers and panelists. Don't miss this great opportunity to build collective strength with CUPE leaders and activists – register now! [Click here to register for the 2022 CUPE National Sector Council Conference](#). Registration closes September 16, 2022.
- Check out a video from the chair of the **CAUT Contract Academic Staff committee**. Nick Papatheodorakos, chair of the CAUT [Contract Academic Staff Committee](#), shares his thoughts on the challenges facing contract academic staff, the power of unions, and the importance of collective action and solidarity. I'll be going to the Contract Academic Staff meeting later in August.
- I don't have room to mention **grievances** but I'll just say that our new VP at the Mount, Don, is very busy.
- **Bargaining update**: Last Tuesday we had another day of conciliation for Dalhousie. We brought three main concerns from what we heard from our membership: salary adjustment for wage parity, salary increases to cover inflation and equal pay for markers and demonstrators as for TAs. We proposed substantial wage increases based on average pay of U15 universities and yearly inflation. The employer proposed a shorter 3 year contract, slightly greater bonuses but no other wage increases. We are scheduling another bargaining date for later in August and at the same are moving ahead with strike preparations. Next week we have a few bargaining dates scheduled for the Mount. We are still working on setting more dates for SMU.

In solidarity,

Karen

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2022!**

Wage Parity Now!

July 8, 2022

Hi everyone. Just a quick update before my vacation:

- At the General Meeting yesterday, we **elected executive positions and non-executive positions**. Congratulations and thanks to all who ran for election! Welcome to the new executive and bargaining team members! Their contact information will be on the website soon.
 - Position: name
 - ...
- To prepare for **possible work stoppage at Dalhousie**, we sent volunteer forms for all Dal members and instructions on signing strike authorization forms for Dal current employees. Please contact Dave or your VP if you have questions.
- I just attended a meeting for **SMU Language Centre instructors** and met some of them in person for the first time. This bargaining unit is in the first stages of preparing for bargaining.

Enjoy the summer!

Karen

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2022!**

Wage Parity Now!

Hi. The Special General Meeting will take place at 4 pm on July 7 at the Mount Faculty Lounge. It will be hybrid so make sure to RSVP to Kim (our membership officer) to receive the zoom invite if attending online. The meeting is called for the by-election of the Mount VP, to elect members to bargaining committees and to vote on a motion to approve an audit.

If you are interested in any of the positions, I encourage you to contact me to get more information ahead of time. Note that at the time of nominations, if you are not present (e.g., if your internet is not working) you will still be considered for the position only if you have emailed me beforehand that you accept the nomination. We encourage nominations from marginalized groups, including but not limited to Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) peoples; BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) members; members with disabilities; in addition to MAGes (Marginalized Genders) and LGBTQIA2S+ members.

I hope to see you next week.

Karen

June 27, 2022

It looks like summer will be busy for CUPE 3912! See below for more on the Dal ratification vote and an upcoming special General Meeting. But summer is also time for vacations and I will be on a family vacation for 2 weeks after July 8. If you need assistance during that time, contact your VP or Dave or Renee.

- The **Dal bargaining team** met today to discuss the results of the ratification vote and will meet again on Wednesday to discuss next steps. There are two vacancies on the bargaining team that could be filled. However, it is very late in the process and at this time there will be a lot more action for strike committees (stay tuned). If you are interested, I encourage you to contact me beforehand to find out more.
- We heard your message loud and clear. Over 90% of those who voted **rejected the tentative agreement**. At the information sessions last week, it was obvious that members

were dissatisfied with the tentative agreement financial proposals. Thank-you to all who voted!

- Tomorrow Mark (CUPE rep) and I will be **meeting with the conciliator** and the chief negotiator for the employer.
- Thanks Larissa for all your work for CUPE 3912! We are looking for a **new VP for the Mount!** Although you can be nominated at the meeting, if you are interested I strongly encourage you to contact me beforehand. I can also tell you more about the position. The reason why we are holding a by-election rather than waiting until the November General Meeting is that this position is very important as we progress in bargaining. Please consider running for this election!
- We will hold a **special General Meeting for a by-election** for the VP for part-time instructors at the Mount. The timing and other details tbd but we're thinking of the end of July. Other things will likely be added to the agenda including the approval of an audit and strike preparation.
- All three universities have lifted or soon will lift their **mask mandate**. If you have any concerns about this or accomodation requests, please contact your VP.
- **Bargaining update (SMU, Mount):** Mark, our new CUPE rep, has contacted the employer about setting new dates.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2022!**

Wage Parity Now!

June 11, 2022

It must be summer because there is not too much going on. The most important activity is the information sessions and vote for ratification of the tentative agreement for Dal members next week. An email was sent to all Dal members – contact Dave if you think you should have received the email but didn't. Last week I attended the CUPE Nova Scotia convention. Some highlights were seeing CUPE staff and CUPE NS executive members in person, and also a speech by the new NS NDP leader. Otherwise things have been slow as our new CUPE rep is learning about our local. Because of this we do not currently have any bargaining dates scheduled.

Enjoy the summer!

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2022!**

Wage Parity Now!

May 25, 2022

I hope everyone is enjoying the good weather. I don't have much of an update. There have been delays for the ratification vote for Dal and setting new bargaining dates for SMU and the Mount.

This is partly because everything seems to be slower during summer semester. Also, we have a new CUPE representative, Mark Cunningham, who I will be meeting later this week. Next week I will be attending the CUPE Nova Scotia convention.

- **Bargaining update:** I almost forgot that we had bargaining last week. At SMU we tabled financial proposals with no response yet from the employer. At the Mount we received their financial package, which was, as expected, well below anything reasonable. We hope to schedule new dates soon.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

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Wage Parity Now!

May 10, 2022

- A couple of weeks ago at conciliation we reached a **tentative agreement** with the Dalhousie administration. We will bring the tentative agreement to Dalhousie CUPE 3912 members for ratification, which means we will ask you to vote on whether or not you approve. We hope to have a plan on the format and timing of the **ratification vote and information session** soon. Details will follow on the process and timing of meetings and voting for ratification.
- CUPE's **Safe Union Spaces Working Group** has worked with external consultants to examine gender-based violence and other forms of discrimination and harassment in our union. Their recent report on the findings was presented at the National Executive Board. The report contains a series of recommendations on how to respond better when gender-based violence, discrimination and harassment complaints are raised and how to change our organizational culture to prevent incidents from happening.
- I attended **CAUT Council** at the end of April. I am now a member of the CAUT Contract Academic Staff Committee. CAUT Council supported the nomination of Diane Piccitto, president of the Mount Faculty Association, for the Equity Award.
- **Bargaining update:** We had to cancel bargaining at SMU on May 5. We have bargaining sessions next week at the Mount and SMU.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

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Wage Parity Now!

April 25, 2022

Belated Happy Earth Day! Thank-you to all of you who attended the Annual General Meeting.

- At the Annual General Meeting, **we elected executive positions and non-executive positions**. Congratulations and thanks to all who ran for election! Welcome to Hariprashanth Deivasigamani! His contact information will be on the website soon.

- Position: name
- ...
- **Thank-you Cameron** for your work as VP for TAs and markers at Sexton campus! Cameron will continue to help CUPE 3912 as a trustee.
- CUPE is hosting **Atlantic Weeklong – Electoral Campaign Think Tank** on June 19-24 at White Point Beach Resort. Does the labour movement always need to be on the defense? Given that COVID makes our work more visible and appreciated, why can't we make advances? Please join us to consider how we move from activism to political decision making. Our goal is to strengthen our electoral readiness. Please join us while we explore: 1. The NDP campaign model and riding association structure. 2. The theoretical/political issues related to restoring our bargaining and organizing power. 3. What it means to manage a campaign and set up an association. 4. Recruiting - what it takes to be a candidate and a politician. We are hoping to recruit members from diverse communities, to ensure the broadest range of voices have a seat at the table.
- **Bargaining update:** We had bargaining at SMU a couple of weeks ago. It really looks like we will table financial proposals next time on May 5, but we'll see what happens. Tomorrow we have all-day conciliation at Dal. We'll see if the employer has anything else to bring to the table. It looks like our next day at the Mount is May 18 but we might meet earlier. As I wrote in my report for the AGM, planning out strategy for a possible strike or other job action is ongoing and dynamic. One of the first steps for strike planning is recruiting volunteers, so please contact Dave if you are interested.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2022!**

Wage Parity Now!

April 12, 2022

I'm still so busy I didn't even realize it has been a while since my last update. I am glad to see I did mention our AGM last update, even though we had not finalized the location. Here are more details about the AGM and other items:

- Our **Annual General Meeting** will be next week on April 22 at 10 am. We decided to have it online rather than hybrid because of the recent surge in covid numbers. We will be having elections for half of the executive positions and a trustee. It is best to contact me beforehand if you are interested to find out more about the positions and also confirm you are interested in being nominated in case your internet connection doesn't work. Don't forget to RSVP to receive your zoom invite.
- At our AGM we will present more information about our bargaining situation, and conciliation and possible strike at Dal. Here I want to emphasize that even if we don't end up going on strike, **the strike mandate is helping us put pressure on the employer.** It has helped us refuse their offers at conciliation, which didn't come close enough to what we are asking for in terms of salary. Without a strike mandate, we might have had no choice but to settle for small increments such as 1-1.5% per year – an actual decrease

after accounting for increasing in cost of living. Hopefully the employer will be able to offer more at conciliation on April 26.

- Here's a message from Erica: How do we organize to build the power we need to win? Let's find out! We need at least 10 CUPE3912 members to register for the '**Organizing for Power: The Core Fundamentals**', a free online training and networking program for organizers worldwide led by Jane McAlevey, a Senior Policy Fellow at the University of California at Berkeley's Labor Center. This training will take place on 6 consecutive Tuesdays from the 10th of May until the 14th of June from 1 pm to 3 pm (ADT-Halifax time). If you are interested, please contact Erica Fischer (our VP for PT instructors at SMU).
- CAUT is offering some **Health and Safety Training** in May and June.
- Last week I gave an update on our bargaining situation to the **CUPE NS executive**.
- **Grievances:** We are working on a couple of grievances at various stages of job postings that were subsequently withdrawn for both PT instructors and TAs/markers at Dal. Please contact your VP if you are aware of other instances.
- **Bargaining update:** We had a bargaining session at the Mount last week where we somewhat wrapped up non-financials or reached an impasse, and then we tabled our financial proposals. The employer was not ready with their financial proposals and cancelled our bargaining for this week in order to consult with the Board of Governors for their response. We are trying to reschedule for early May. We have bargaining at SMU this week.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2022!**

Wage Parity Now!

April 1, 2022

It's been a while since my last update – I've been busy! Along with the usual bargaining and grievances, we've also had our successful strike vote at Dalhousie. Here are some updates:

- ****We really need your **non-university emails!** especially if you are currently working at Dal. Please send Dave your non-university email to add to our database.
- Our **Annual General Meeting** has been set for April 22 at 10 am. More details to follow.
- CUPE is holding a webinar on April 7 on **Sexual violence and harassment** in post-secondary education. All members are welcome.
- Also from CUPE National: **Black, Indigenous and racialized CUPE members** across the country are being invited to a virtual national gathering on April 9.
- I attended the **CAUT Forum for Chief Negotiators**. One interesting bit of information is that there have been more strikes at universities recently than in the last 6 years combined.
- **Grievances:** We keep filing grievances and following up with meetings and filing step 2 grievances. The latest is a series of concerns at Dalhousie about hourly instructors working more hours than they are paid.

- **Bargaining update:** We had a bargaining session at SMU last week when we continued to work on fine details of proposals and counter proposals, reaching an impasse for some but still trying to agree on others before tabling financial proposals. We have another bargaining session at the Mount next week. We just finished two days of conciliation for Dalhousie. Although we did some more work on language, we are still really far apart on financial proposals so we have reached an impasse. The conciliator will file his report on April 12 and we have another day of conciliation scheduled for April 26 to try to reach a last-minute deal before we will be able to call a strike.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2022!**

Wage Parity Now!

March 15, 2022

We are busy preparing for the strike vote for Dal next week. If you want to help get out the vote but are also very busy – the most valuable thing you could do is to spread the word by making sure all TAs, markers and instructors that you know at Dal are informed about the strike vote.

Here are some strike preparation items and other things going on:

- We are planning **information sessions for the strike vote** on zoom and outdoors:
 - PT course instructors – Friday March 18 at noon
 - TAs and markers – Monday March 21 at noon
 - Truro – Wednesday March 23 at 4
 - Hourly paid instructors – Thursday March 24 at 5
 - **Outdoors!** – outside SUB on Tuesday March 22, 12:30-2, rain date March 23
 - Zoom invites below
- I got some good news. CAUT executive is going to recommend me as a member of the **Contract Academic Staff committee**, subject to ratification at the next Council meeting.
- **Grievances:** Grievances still keep coming. The latest concerns a position that was posted but then removed before the deadline and given to FT faculty. The employer is not allowed to do this. Let us know if this happens to a job you thought about.
- **Bargaining update:** We had a bargaining session at the Mount last week but still did not table financial proposals. Our next bargaining dates are March 29 for SMU, March 31 for Dal (conciliation) and April 8 for the Mount.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2022!**

Wage Parity Now!

March 8, 2022

As you know, we will have a strike vote at Dal on March 25. Although we are focused on mobilizing our current Dal employees to vote, there are other things going on for CUPE 3912.

- Our mobilization team has put together a timeline for tasks to be done to **get out the vote**. We are also **looking for volunteers** for a variety of activities, most of which will not take too much time, especially if we have lots of volunteers. Please contact Dave if you are interested in volunteering. You can also help simply by sharing the information we have on the strike vote with current Dalhousie employees. We will have a special webpage up soon.
- One idea we have had is to hold a **rally** or mini-rally a few days before the strike vote. Please contact Dave if you are interested in helping out or participating, especially if you have prior experience.
- Please note that **we will not announce the results of the strike vote until after conciliation**.
- The next **CAUT Council** will now be hybrid on April 28 and 29, 1:30-5:30. Let me know if you are interested in participating.
- CAUT put out an **Urgent Appeal: Solidarity with Ukraine**. They are joining with Education International in standing in solidarity with students, teachers, academics, and the people of Ukraine to condemn Russia's horrific invasion. They call upon the Canadian government and the international community to step up efforts to provide humanitarian assistance to those affected by the violence, and to increase the pressure on the Russian government to immediately withdraw its forces from Ukraine. Education International is working closely with its Ukrainian member organizations. Trade unions in neighbouring countries are also supporting the growing number of Ukrainian refugees, providing food and water provisions, medical supplies and hygiene items.
- **Bargaining update**: We had a bargaining session at SMU last week and have one at the Mount this week. At both universities we are still focusing on wrapping up non-financial proposals (mostly) so we have not yet tabled financial proposals. Because we are a bit behind Dalhousie, we have not yet set a date for a strike vote at either university. If you are a member at SMU or the Mount, you can help by spreading the word about the strike vote to Dalhousie employees. A successful strike vote and a fair collective agreement at Dal will help bargaining at SMU and the Mount as well.
- If you'd like to see the **latest bargaining summaries** ...

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2022!**

Wage Parity Now!

Feb. 28, 2022

I extend my thoughts and support to the people of Ukraine and their family and friends in Canada. I am not familiar with the political situation but it is obvious that these terrible events are an outrageous attack on democracy. CUPE National has put out a statement in support of Ukraine – see below.

- I've been asked to keep repeating this message: **A strike vote does not mean that we will necessarily go on strike**, but it does mean we will have strong support from our members that will be really helpful in bargaining. Stay tuned for more.
- We had another **meeting with CUPE Communications** person Colleen Reynolds, who gave us tips on mobilizing members. Stay tuned for new ideas such as videos or texts.
- The next **CAUT Council** is online on April 28 and 29, 1:30-5:30. Let me know if you are interested in participating.
- **From CAUT: Solidarity as other staff unions move towards strike votes.** 2022 is shaping up to be an exceptional year for academic staff job action across the country. The year started with a successful, two-week strike that resulted in Concordia University of Edmonton Faculty Association (CUEFA) ratifying a new deal. It was the first academic staff strike in Alberta's history. Turn-out for strike votes has been high, with strong mandates for job action. Members of Association des professeurs et bibliothécaires de l'Université Sainte-Anne may be next, with possible strike votes coming soon. Meanwhile, CAUT Executive and Defence Fund members joined picket lines in Wolfville, NS, Lethbridge, and Oshawa this month to show solidarity with striking unions.
- **Grievances:** At the start of last week almost all of our grievances were on hold – in abeyance or waiting for arbitration. Then on Thursday we filed five grievances at all three universities regarding evaluation, discrimination, hiring, privacy and employment classification. The last one concerns is a policy grievance concerning several members at Dal and may include many more. We discovered that many of our members were paid as demonstrators but had been performing TA duties and therefore should have been paid at a higher hourly rate. If this is happening to you or anyone you know, please inform your VP.
- **Bargaining update:** Dates of March 31 and April 1 have been set for conciliation at Dal. Last Friday we had double bargaining sessions at the Mount and SMU. At both we agreed on a few more articles but are still negotiating details before we wrap up some major proposals on internal/external hiring for SMU and discipline for the Mount. We have financial proposals ready to table and are anxiously waiting to wrap up (mostly) non-financial items. We have a bargaining session at SMU this week and at the Mount next week.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2022!**

Wage Parity Now!

CUPE stands in solidarity with the people of Ukraine

CUPE extends our solidarity to the people of Ukraine, who are now living in fear of military violence and occupation after Russia attacked their country. We further extend solidarity to the people in the streets of Russia opposing this dangerous escalation of violence and act of war.

To health care and emergency service workers, journalists and all the workers who will continue to do their jobs despite the risk, we support you.

CUPE calls on the Canadian government to make every effort to de-escalate this situation. We support and encourage solutions leading to peace. Efforts to support people fleeing war and who want to come to Canada are critically important right now. These measures must be applied to all countries caught up in unjust wars and the suffering they bring.

CUPE solidarity extends beyond borders. We are committed to supporting the workers and people of Ukraine, and the anti-war activists in Russia, until a peaceful solution is realized.

Feb. 15, 2022

I hope everyone enjoyed a snowy Valentine's Day! Things are busy in CUPE 3912 with bargaining ramping up and preparations for a strike vote. Here I'll try to capture what we're working on. But first I will clarify information about a strike vote.

- **Strike vote:** According to NS legislation, a strike mandate is when 50% + 1 of current employees vote yes to a strike mandate. This means that only current employees can vote and not voting = voting no.
- **Strike mandate:** A strike mandate does NOT mean that we will necessarily go on strike. Mostly it provides strong support to the bargaining team so they can make more gains in conciliation. If no agreement is reached, the conciliator files a report and then there can be a strike after a two week cooling off period. Often a deal is reached at the last minute (as for FT faculty at the Mount and SMU recently).
- On Saturday late afternoon, some members of the executive, bargaining teams and mobilization committee stayed inside during the warm weather to participate in a **CUPE Strike Preparation workshop**. We learned a lot, mostly that it is a lot of work!
 - We also found out that PTers teaching one course at the base stipend level and probably most TAs will actually earn more from strike pay (\$300 per week to start) than teaching!
 - We also realized that we need to recruit a lot of volunteers! Remember the more people who volunteer, the less work there is for each volunteer. Please think about how you might be able to help with the 4 pillars of strike preparation: administration, finance, communication and picketing.
- I have been having **meetings with Mike Kelly (our CUPE representative) and Tracey Pinder (CUPE Regional Director)**, who is helping us with bargaining strategy. At the meeting this week, I will ask their advice on the timing of our strike votes.
- We have also been meeting with the mobilization committee for our **campaign**. Today we met with James Hutt from CAUT. Last week we met with Colleen Reynolds from CUPE National Communications and will meet with her again tomorrow. So we have lots of help from both CUPE and CAUT!
- On Friday we will have a meeting with all bargaining teams to provide a **recommendation on a date for the strike votes**, which we will bring to the executive next week.
- Our latest **bylaw amendments** have been approved (mostly). The updated bylaws are now on our website.
- There are currently **three faculty associations on strike** – UOIT, Lethbridge and Acadia University. They are getting a lot of support from other faculty unions.
- **Bargaining update:** For Dal a conciliator has been assigned and we are waiting for dates. We bargained at SMU yesterday and made some more progress. Both sides are

hoping to wrap up non-monetary items (mostly) and table financial proposals soon. We are in a similar situation at the Mount, where we bargained on Friday. We are in bargaining at both SMU and the Mount next Friday.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2022!**

Wage Parity Now!

Feb. 7, 2022

Thanks to all those who participated in our special General Meeting on Friday! It's great to move forward by increasing communication on bargaining, recruiting more members to our mobilization committee, refocusing on mobilization and looking forward to a strike preparation workshop. Here are some details:

- Please contact Dave or I if you are interested in **getting more involved**. Right now we are recruiting for our mobilization committee but we will probably have more tasks later. We have an important meeting with Colleen from CUPE Communications on Friday.
- We invite all members of the mobilization committee, as well as the executive and bargaining teams, to attend **our strike preparation workshop** on Feb. 12. If you are interested, please contact Dave or I. Michelle Cohen organizes the workshop. Thanks Michelle for speaking at our GM!
- Our long-time VP for Dalhousie PT instructors, Carmel Forde, has not only been appointed again to the CUPE National Post-Secondary Education Task Force, but she is now co-chair! Congratulations Carmel!
- **Acadia University Faculty Association is on strike** and fighting for fair working conditions including for PT instructors, who are part of their union. They have scheduled a **rally for this Friday**. Please contact Dave if you are interested in attending this driving picket. I wish I could go but I will be in bargaining.
- **Bargaining update:** I don't have anything to report because the employer at the Mount cancelled bargaining on Friday because of the ice storm. Hopefully there will not be another storm this week so we can get back to this table this Friday at the Mount. We have bargaining at SMU and Dal next week.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2022!**

Wage Parity Now!

Jan. 31, 2022

Now is the time to act! Now is the time to get involved! Wage Parity NOW! This week the VPs are providing more information on bargaining and we will have extensive bargaining updates at the **General Meeting** this Friday. You can get involved by becoming informed, coming to the

General Meeting and volunteering for the mobilization committee, which we plan to enlarge as we enter the end game of bargaining.

- Last week VPs and I met with administration from the three universities about the **return to in-person classes**. SMU appears to be quite strict and is only granting accommodation for online teaching with a medical note. At the Mount they asked PT and FT faculty their preference beforehand and seem to be taking it into account. At Dal they also seem to be flexible in granting exemptions to the return to in-person teaching. Contact your VP if you have concerns about your situation.
- We have been informed about **TAs not being paid**, being paid markers' wages and not being able to access Brightspace. If anything similar is happening to you, please contact your VP. We work to correct these issues and file grievances to get answers and make sure this does not happen again.
- On Saturday I participated in a **CUPE Safe Union Spaces** listening session. After hearing about harassment and discrimination from union presidents (men), I made the comment that I think we should encourage more women and members of marginalized groups to run for election for president and other executive positions, and that we should ensure favourable conditions to prevent harassment and discrimination to keep them in these positions.
- **CAUT has provided some recommendations** to hold administrations to account by providing a safe return-to-campus including ensuring things like adequate ventilation, consultation with the Health and Safety Committees, compliance with vaccination policies, availability of rapid tests, provision of medical grade masks to staff and students, adequate space for social distancing, plans for those who fall ill or need to self-isolate, ensuring hybrid teaching is not required because of the extra workload, and accommodations for those at risk. We are trying hard to follow this advice but it is an ongoing challenge. Here are some links they have provided:

Ventilation Information and Guidelines

Canada/International:

[Guidance on indoor ventilation during the pandemic \[Government of Canada, 2021-01-18\]](#)

[COVID-19: Improving indoor ventilation \[Government of Canada, 2022-01-11\]](#)

[Roadmap to improve and ensure good indoor ventilation in the context of COVID-19 \[World Health Organization, 2021-04-13\]](#)

Nova Scotia:

[Occupational Safety General Regulations \(Sec. 15\) \[Occupational Health and Safety Act, 2013-06-12\]](#)

[Employer's Guide for COVID-19 Prevention \[Government of Nova Scotia, 2021-10-25\]](#)

- **Bargaining update:** Last week we squeezed in a short bargaining session at Dal during which I had to leave early. We exchanged another round of financial proposals but agreed we were still far apart so we are **filing for conciliation** to begin Feb. 16. After I left I had unconfirmed reports that the employer claims to be competitive nationally for full-time faculty but not for us! They also claim that their expenses keep increasing so that they can't pay us more – what about our expenses? Now we need to be paid more not only to be on par with almost all other PT faculty and most TAs in Canada but also just to keep up with increase in the cost of living. Finally they claim to be passionate about EDIA and yet cannot oblige our request for marginal increase for our members, many of whom

come from marginalized groups. Come to our General Meeting to learn more, including the latest on bargaining at the Mount on Friday afternoon. Wage Parity NOW!

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2022!**

Wage Parity Now!

Jan. 24, 2022

Last week I met with Tracey, the CUPE regional director, and Mike, our CUPE representative.

We agreed it is time to press the fast forward button on bargaining. So be prepared for special General Meetings, further communication on bargaining, conciliation, strike votes and information sessions and more! I'll have more details next week. In the meantime, please consider helping out more if you can. If we do get to a strike vote, there will be lots to do.

- On Friday I attended the **CAUT Forum for Presidents** including a discussion group on Harassment and Discrimination within the Association. It was very helpful to share stories. One idea that was proposed is that CAUT develop a database on codes of conduct used in different associations.
- I submitted my nomination form to be a member of the **CAUT Contract Academic Staff committee**. If selected, I would represent CUPE 3912 as a medium-sized CAS association.
- CAUT has been helping us again with **data analysis for financial proposals**.
- Last week I reported on the post-secondary section for **CUPE NS executive meeting**.
- CUPE National is looking for members to serve on **CUPE's regional trial panels**; contact me if you are interested.
- During bargaining we (i.e., me and others not very familiar with labour laws) became aware that **workers compensation does not apply to university campuses**. We are finding out more about this and what we can do about it in and outside of bargaining. For you, this means that if you fall and break your leg on campus (or get covid), you will not be covered by workers compensation. I am not an expert but if you have any questions I can try to find someone to help answer them.
- The **Acadia University Faculty Association** has announced a strike deadline of 1 February. To keep spirits up and build solidarity, the Job Action Social and Morale Committee invites other faculty associations in Nova Scotia to contribute to a short video message to boost AUFA members' morale. If you'd be willing to record a 30-second video stating your name, what association you belong to, and that you support AUFA members and why, they would greatly appreciate it. Here's the link:
<https://share.vidday.com/o-uayx60>
- **Bargaining update:** Last week we bargained again at the Mount. We reached agreements on a few more minor proposals but we still seem to be far apart on more major proposals regarding hiring and discipline. We have prepared financial proposals but have not yet tabled them. We meet again on Feb. 4. This week we managed to add another short bargaining session at Dal on Wednesday to see how much closer we will get on our wage proposals.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2022!**

Wage Parity Now!

Jan. 17, 2022

Surprisingly there is not much to report this week. I actually haven't heard much from you about the return to campus after teaching remotely these first few weeks. I think it's probably because everyone is waiting to find out if we are really going back to campus. Currently I do not know any more than you do. If you have any concerns please email your VP.

- I have not followed politics that closely and especially not in the 1990s, but I do remember **Alexa McDonough** as an excellent role model who paved the way for women leaders in Canada.
- At the **Language Centre** the instructors are not treated the same as other instructors at SMU. They were obliged to come to campus to teach in their empty classrooms despite our efforts to allow them to be given a choice. Fortunately exceptions were granted for those who tested positive for covid or had to isolate. Lauren (our VP for TLC) is working hard to make sure that those who need to will be able to teach from home.
- **Bargaining update:** Last week we bargained at both SMU and the Mount (online). For both we are working on wrapping up non-financial proposals – or deciding what is at an impasse – before tabling financial proposals. At SMU we seem to be quite close but at the Mount we are still in some initial discussions about some major issues. The delay in the Mount compared to the other universities is mostly because the employer filed for conciliation last year early in the process. The conciliator advised both sides to go back to the table so we had a restart at the end of 2021, at which time we were lagging behind the other two universities. However, we have more dates scheduled for the Mount in the next few weeks, so that might change.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2022!**

Jan. 10, 2022

Happy New Year! It seems a bit like the last one – in the middle of bargaining, in the middle of a pandemic. Hopefully we'll see a successful end to both this year.

- PT instructors, TAs, markers, TLC instructors – everyone! Please remember that **you can contact your VP** if you ever have a work-related concern or issue. We are here to help you. If you are uncertain about who to contact, feel free to email me first.
- The CUPE 3912 executive voted to make a **donation to the Concordia University of Edmonton Faculty Association**. They are on strike regarding a similar as us – very low wages. See their website for more details.

- We also voted to make a contribute to Pat O’Neill’s favorite charity. See our latest **newsletter** for an article about Pat and more.
- If you want to **learn more about bargaining** or refresh your memory, check out the past article Bargaining 101, still on our website.
- **Bargaining update:** This past week we tabled our financial proposals at Dalhousie. Next week we have bargaining at both the Mount and SMU. Our discussions followed the common steps of us explaining that we deserve a lot more money because other PTERS at Canadian universities get a lot more money, and them replying that we don’t have a lot to give you and we don’t need to anyway because other PTERS in Halifax (i.e., at SMU and the Mount) get the same. This time we intend to break this cycle of the three universities using the others as comparators to justify our low wages. We also had an excellent presentation by Fallen, VP for TAs and Markers at Studley, who explained how a substantial wage adjustment would help marginalized groups, something Dalhousie has repeatedly promised to do. If the employer(s) continue to deny us fair wages despite our efforts, **WE NEED YOUR HELP** if we are to gain any substantial increase in stipends! Please look out for further information, follow our campaign and attend future meetings (tbd). Wage Parity NOW!

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2022!**

Dec. 20, 2021

Note: Just after I wrote this I received sad news that Pat O’Neill, a former CUPE 3912 VP for the Mount, passed away a few months ago. He was always very supportive and helpful in our union, particularly during my first months as president. You can read more about his incredible life:

<https://www.whitefamilyfuneralhome.com/obituaries/156914>

Happy Holidays! Last update for 2021. I hope you all enjoy some time off and stay healthy.

- Welcome Lauren MacKenzie! At our Fall General Meeting we elected Lauren as our new **VP for the Language Centre at SMU**.
- Also at our General Meeting we approved some **bylaws amendments** including an increase in the per diem rate but we voted to defer discussion of the remaining bylaw amendments, probably for a special GM.
- We are planning a **new campaign** to be launched in January to raise awareness about our working conditions as we enter the final phase of bargaining – notably how we should be paid much more! See next item and stay tuned!
- In our campaign we are planning to **focus on the numbers**. CAUT recently updated their information on stipends for contract academic staff and the **average base and top stipends nationally are \$7 225 and \$8 387**.
- Solidarity is always important for unions, especially the union executive during bargaining. Therefore the executive had a workshop on **Leading as a Team** last week and will continue in January.
- **Bargaining update:** We had bargaining days at Dal and the Mount last week. At Dal we finished most of the discussion on non-financial items with the employer; however, we

have reached an impasse for some of these items so they remain unresolved. We will table financial proposals at our next meeting on Jan. 7. At the Mount we had further discussion on most of the non-financial items, trying to see if there is some common ground. We resume bargaining at SMU and the Mount in the second week of January.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

Dec. 9, 2021

Happy Snow Day! I love snow and I just wish I had time to go skiing before it rains this weekend. Mostly this email is a reminder about the General Meeting tomorrow! I hope you can join in person or on zoom. Here is more info and a few other things:

- Our hybrid **Fall General Meeting** is tomorrow Dec. 10 at 1 pm in the Faculty Lounge at the Mount or on Zoom. We will have **wine and cheese and other goodies** (thanks Larissa)! Check out our poster for more details. **Please RSVP.**
- **CAUT** is having a conference on **Academic Freedom and the Law** on February 10-11, 2022.
- **Grievances, arbitrations, complaints:** We have recently successfully resolved some grievances at Dal related to hiring before they went to arbitration. We have also been dealing with some discipline meetings at more than one university. ****If you receive a request to come to an urgent meeting with administration at the university, this may (or may not) be related to discipline; please contact your VP ASAP.****
- **Bargaining update:** We had two full days of bargaining at the Mount this week and went over all of our non-financial proposals at least twice. We agreed to several minor proposals and started discussions on more substantial proposals. Next week we have bargaining days for both the Mount and Dal.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

Dec. 2, 2021

It's been a while since my last update because I've been so busy with the CUPE Convention, CAUT Council and bargaining!

- We finally decided on a location for the hybrid **Fall General Meeting** on Dec. 10 at 1 pm – the Faculty Lounge at the Mount. It works well for hybrid meetings including the ones for the Mount Faculty Association. Check out our poster for more details including some of the content such as bargaining updates, by-law amendments and a by-election for VP SMU TLC (Language Centre). The zoom link, agenda, proposed by-law amendments and executive and committee reports will be emailed to those who rsvp with a non-university email so **please RSVP.**

- For the **Joint Operational Health and Safety Committees**, I found out that at the Mount, Minutes are posted on the Mount's intranet on the intranet/departments/safety/MSVU JOHSC website (<https://msvuhfx.sharepoint.com/sites/Intranet/depts/safety>) and also in each building of the Mount on a dedicated bulletin board. At Dal there is a link to access the Minutes (<https://dalu.sharepoint.com/sites/mydal/dc/admin/safety/SitePages/Dalhousie%20Environmental%20Health%20and%20Safety%20Committee.aspx>); a Dal NetID and password are needed to log in.
- I attended the **CAUT Council** meeting last week. There was a lot of discussion and support for the University of Manitoba Faculty Association strike, which is still ongoing.
- There has also been a strike vote closer to home at Acadia; the **Acadia Faculty Association now has a mandate to strike**.
- The biannual **CUPE National Convention** was also last week. A couple of things of note include the motion to expand the Code of Conduct to CUPE events and activities at all levels and the election of the first female secretary-treasurer in about 20 years.
- There is a **CUPE campaign to bring home Cihan Erdal**, a CUPE 4600 member and TA at Carleton University who is being wrongly detained in Turkey. See these links for more information on how you can help.
- **Bargaining update:** We have been bargaining intensely at SMU and getting ready to bargain at the Mount next week. Dal will be the week after. We are focused on wrapping up non-monetary issues at all universities this month and planning to table financial proposals in the new year.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

Nov. 18, 2021

I hope you had a productive and enjoyable fall break. Next week I am double-booked for the **CUPE National Convention** and **CAUT Council** (both virtual) so I might skip my update. Here are some things for this week:

- A reminder for the **Fall General Meeting** on Dec. 10 at 1 pm when we will have by-law amendments and a by-election for VP SMU TLC (Language Centre). We are planning a hybrid meeting and will have a poster with more details soon.
- We crunched the numbers again for assessing the **changes in the number of CUPE 3912 contracts** this year compared to previous years (thanks Dave!). For fall term, the number of contracts has increased again at the Mount after the dramatic decrease last year. It has also increased at SMU. At Dal, the number of regular part-time contracts has decreased again for an all-time low in the past five years. The number of TAs has also decreased but there are a lot more markers so it seems they have converted quite a few TA positions to marker positions. The number of contracts for hourly paid instructors has increased dramatically.

- **Bargaining update:** Bargaining resumes very soon after the week-long CUPE National Convention with sessions in late November and early December. We have several dates planned for each university in the coming weeks.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

Nov. 4, 2021

I hope you all enjoy the fall break. I will be away and so it might take longer to reply to emails next week.

- I am looking into some issues regarding the **Joint Operational Health and Safety Committees** at the three universities such as ensuring our representatives are paid. I am also finding out how Minutes are available to our members. I found out that at SMU, Minutes are publicly available at the following link: <https://www.smu.ca/about/joint-ohs-committee-minutes.htm>
- CUPE NS has arranged **Member Organizing training** in Truro Nov. 26-28 for members who would like to get more involved and have organizing talents.
- The **University of Manitoba Faculty Association is on strike**. Notably they are asking for fair wages because their faculty are paid some of the lowest wages in the country. Sound familiar?
- The October 2021 issue of the **CAUT Bulletin** focuses on climate justice on campus.
- **Bargaining update:** As I mentioned last time, we do not have bargaining dates until late November. I know that bargaining is taking a long time. There are several reasons for this. 1) We are bargaining with three employers at the same time. Although last time we finished earlier at one university, we signed the collective agreement at the third university almost three years after the previous one expired. 2) We have a lot of proposals because there are a lot of changes to be made to the collective agreement to achieve fair working conditions. It takes time to discuss these proposals and we are making progress. 3) It is difficult to schedule times when 7-11 people are available. The schedule of our CUPE representative is particularly busy as whoever is in this position also assists other locals and is at other bargaining tables as well. Also note that we (union bargaining team) do not get time off for bargaining, as may be the case for other bargaining teams. However, we are setting several dates at all universities in the next few months hoping to wrap up soon. Also note that we are continually working on bargaining with extra meetings for the individual teams and all teams together.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

Oct. 28, 2021

Happy Halloween! Just a few items this week:

- Although very few of you may know **Rory Leitch**, the Language Centre Instructors know their CUPE 3912 Vice President very well. After many years of service, Rory has resigned from his position as CUPE 3912 VP for TLC. In the words of his members, Rory has been a ray of hope who fights for righteousness, fairness and decency. We are all grateful for his leadership and support over many years. Thank-you so much Rory for your years of dedication to fairness for ESL teachers at SMU!
- Remember our **General Meeting** will be on Dec. 10 at 1 pm. We are working on preparations for an effective hybrid meeting with refreshments. There will be a by-election for the position of VP for SMU Language Centre and also voting on by-law amendments.
- As part of **CAUT Fair Employment Week**, last Friday Larissa gave an invited presentation on Part-time Precarity to the Mount Faculty Association, with Gabi and I also helping to answer questions in the discussion that followed. Later I joined the CAUT Online Social for Contract Academic Staff.
- **Bargaining update:** Last week the focus for bargaining was on Dalhousie with a day and a half of bargaining. We discussed a lot of proposals including our common proposals, TA-specific proposals and a proposal to update hiring processes towards continuing appointments similar to the one we proposed at SMU. As at SMU, it looks like we are coming to an agreement for several proposals but are still negotiating some of the wording. Our CUPE rep is not available most of November so our next dates at all three universities are in late November or December. We are booking dates well into January so we can make sure to reserve as much time as possible for bargaining.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

Oct. 19, 2021

Hello. I hope everyone enjoyed the long Thanksgiving weekend. I took advantage of the holiday by skipping my update last week because I've been busy. Part of why I'm really busy this month is that we're back at the bargaining tables. See below for an update and other news.

- This week is CAUT's **Fair Employment Week**. The Mount Faculty Association has invited Larissa and I to present at their pre-meeting 2-3 on Friday; our members are also invited – contact Larissa if you are interested. CAUT will host a **Social Media Day of Action** tomorrow and an informal **Zoom Social** on Friday. Share your stories on social media with the hashtag #makeitfair.
- As part of Fair Employment Week, both the Mount and Dal faculty associations are showing the film **'In Search of Professor Precarious'**. Dal has made it available for guests so our members are welcome to see it this week. Contact Dave if you are interested.
- Are you **new to CUPE 3912** and wondering about bargaining? Check out the Bargaining tab on our website. Our last newsletter also has some information about issues we are addressing in bargaining.

- **Grievances, arbitrations, complaints:** Larissa, Erica and Carmel have been busy scheduling or attending grievance or labour management meetings. VPs always provide more details on these issues in their reports at the General Meetings.
- **Bargaining update:** We had three afternoon bargaining sessions at SMU in quick succession (Oct. 7, 12, 14). The only thing we discussed is a set of proposals to update the hiring and appointment processes towards continuing appointments, one of our bargaining priorities. After a few exchanges it looked like we were coming to an agreement but we are still negotiating some of the wording. Yesterday evening the Dal bargaining team met before resuming our negotiations at the table this week. Our CUPE rep is not available most of November so our next dates at all three universities are in late November or December. We are booking dates well into January so we can make sure to reserve as much time as possible for bargaining.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

Oct. 6, 2021

Enjoy Thanksgiving weekend and the great weather we are having! Just a few things this week.

- Our **fall General Meeting** will be at 1 pm on Dec. 10 (note time change).
- Today I gave an update for the post-secondary sector to the **CUPE NS Executive**. One of the candidates for CUPE National Secretary-Treasurer, Candace Rennick, spoke at the meeting. I asked her to comment on the situation with needing more CUPE representatives and I expressed my concerns about CUPE reps being overworked. She said there is a committee looking at CUPE staffing that is resuming after being put on hold during the pandemic.
- **Grievances, arbitrations, complaints:** We filed a grievance for a refusal to accommodate at the Mount.
- **Bargaining update:** Today we had a ‘reset’ bargaining meeting at the Mount when we discussed plans for returning to bargaining. It was the first time we met with the employer at the bargaining table since May. We are hopeful negotiations will proceed effectively and efficiently; however, we could only plan for dates in December due to our lack of availability. (It is difficult to schedule bargaining dates with 3 employers.) Tomorrow we resume bargaining at Saint Mary’s University after a couple of months. We had a team preparation meeting yesterday to make sure we are prepared for the employer’s response to our proposals regarding job postings, hiring and the 3-yr appointment process. We discussed the importance of the employer’s recognition of our professional development including research achievements. Something we are working on at all universities is reworking our common proposals into language specific to each collective agreement. Our common proposals include the highest priorities for our members including salary increase, benefits and continuing appointment. However, the employer’s response has been mixed in that sometimes they don’t quite understand how we wanted to include them as common proposals for all universities to emphasize that

they are important for all our members. We hope that they will relate better to university-specific collective agreement language.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

Oct. 1, 2021

Here are the updates this week:

- Our **fall General Meeting** will be at 2 pm on Dec. 10. We have not yet decided if it will be online, in-person or hybrid.
- The **CUPE National Convention** and **CAUT Council** will both be online during the week of Nov. 22-26. It will be easier to have more members attending since it is online so contact me if you are interested.
- CAUT will host a virtual interactive forum — ***“Building Solidarity and Alliances: Indigenizing the Academy”*** on Friday, October 15, 2021, from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. (Eastern Time). The forum is an opportunity for all members of the academic community — Indigenous and non-Indigenous — to come together in the spirit of reconciliation and explore concrete approaches to advancing and strengthening Indigenization of the academy. **[Dr. Lorna Wanosts’a7 Williams](#)** will open this event as keynote speaker, followed by a panel discussion on collective bargaining wins, Indigenous self-identification, and recruitment and retention of Indigenous academic staff.
- From CAUT: **Tuition fees on the rise: new Statistics Canada data.** Undergraduate and graduate students across Canada—in particular, international students—are paying **[higher tuition fees](#)** this academic year. Nationally, Canadian students enrolled full-time in undergraduate programs will pay, on average, \$6,693 in tuition for the upcoming 2021-2022 academic year, up 1.7% from the previous year. The average cost for graduate programs rose 1.5% to \$7,472. As provincial contributions to education have declined in recent years, post-secondary institutions are relying increasingly on international students to boost their revenue. International students are paying almost 5% more in 2021-2022. Overall, tuition now accounts for more than one-third (31.6%) of the operating revenue stream for post-secondary education institutions—up from one-quarter (25.5%) six years ago.
- **CAUT’s Fair Employment Week (FEW)** is taking place from October 18 – 22, 2021. FEW is CAUT’s annual event designed to raise awareness about precarious employment on campus and to support your local association’s organizing efforts to improve the working conditions of contract academic staff. In light of COVID-19, CAUT has also organized online events for contract academic staff from across the country to come together virtually to network with one another and discuss the issues they are facing. Online events will include a panel with academic staff organizing nationally and internationally on CAS issues; a social media day of action on Wednesday, October 20; and a contract academic staff social on Friday, October 22.

- **Bargaining update:** We have bargaining dates set for the Mount and SMU next week and for Dal in a couple of weeks. We are looking forward to getting back to the table or Zoom to negotiating for fair working conditions.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

Sept. 24, 2021

Happy Fall! I hope everyone is doing well starting classes whether they are online or in-person.

Here are some updates:

- We will likely have our **fall General Meeting** on Dec. 10. We will have motions for **by-law amendments** at this meeting.
- The **CUPE National Convention** was going to be held in-person in Vancouver in November but will now be held online.
- CUPE created a **National Safe Union Spaces Working Group** to address serious concerns about gender-based violence and other forms of harassment and discrimination in our union. External consultants will be holding a series of focus groups to help CUPE review existing tools and processes, and identify gaps where we need changes or additional resources to ensure safer union spaces for all members. Some of the sessions are being held specifically for members of our equity-seeking groups. Members are welcome to attend the session for any group that they identify as a member of, and all members are welcome in the general sessions. Focus groups will take place on Zoom. Please contact Dave if you are interested in joining a focus group for all members, Black members, Indigenous members, racialized members, persons with a disability, LGBTQ2+ members, young workers, or women. Dates range up to Oct. 4.
- The **CAUT September Bulletin** is available.
- On April 22, CAUT Council took the unusual measure of **censuring the Administration of the University of Toronto over a hiring scandal in the Faculty of Law**. Council delegates concluded that the decision not to proceed with the hiring of Dr. Valentina Azarova as Director of the International Human Rights Program, following an intervention by a prominent donor and sitting judge, violated widely recognized principles of academic freedom. In discussions and correspondence with the University Administration, CAUT has conveyed that the principal condition for the lifting of censure would be for the University to re-offer the position to Dr. Azarova. It is our understanding that this key condition has now been met. After careful consideration, however, Dr. Azarova has declined the offer. Considering this development, the CAUT Executive Committee is advising that the censure of the Administration of the University of Toronto be suspended pending a final decision by CAUT Council at its meeting of November 25 and 26. Until then, the Executive Committee is calling for a pause in all actions related to censure. The unprecedented efforts and solidarity of CAUT members and allies within the University of Toronto, across the country, and around the world have forced the University to reverse course and reinstate Dr. Azarova's offer of

employment. This is a significant victory for academic freedom, and CAUT extends its deep gratitude to all those who supported and campaigned around the censure.

- **Bargaining update:** Remember we have a break from bargaining this month and will continue in October.
- **Grievances, arbitrations, complaints:** This past week we informed the Dalhousie administration that we are taking 4 grievances to arbitration. There are two sets of two grievances each in different departments and they all concern hiring and our members not getting courses to teach that they should have been hired to teach – they were qualified, had high precedence and had not reached their maximum courseload. We also had a meeting about a policy grievance for the Language Centre about the instructors losing benefits during the pandemic because they are (mistakenly) no longer considered employees. Language Centre instructors have a different system; they received contracts every 8 weeks while they continue to be employees and have benefits. We had a Labour Management Committee meeting at SMU about emergency hiring being used for too many courses, specifically in Biology where there no job postings for courses this fall. Please let us know if this is the case for any other departments.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

Sept. 17, 2021

Several things this week:

- Congratulations Gabor Lukacs on becoming our **new Communications Officer!** We had 3 candidates and 3 votes. At the Special General Meeting we also confirmed 3 new members of the Mobilization Committee: Drew MacEachern, Mohammad Ramezani and Greg Canning. Thanks to all who participated.
- You may have noticed that we have a **new website**. Thanks to Ian Clysdale from CUPE, Anas and Dave!
- **CAUT's For Our Future federal election campaign** calls for strong federal leadership that highlights the need for increased investments in post-secondary education and research to boost Canada's post-pandemic recovery. You can visit ourfuture.caut.ca and send a message to candidates running in your riding to make post-secondary education a priority and share our party platform summary on key issues using the attached shareable and learn more about the policy issues here.
- CAUT is seeking to fill two casual **vacancies on the Equity Committee** for (1) a member representing academic staff with disabilities and (2) a member representing Women academic staff for a term that will expire in May 2024. Contact me for more information if you are interested.
- Today the CUPE 3912 executive voted to provide some financial support for members of **CUPE Local 1349** Town of Grand Falls-Windsor in Newfoundland and Labrador, approximately 90 members in total, have been locked out with their employer since July 15, 2021 with no end in sight. The lock-out stems from the Employer's attempt to obtain concessions at the table regarding health benefits and other provisions.

- Here is a **message from CUPE National**: The National Safe Spaces Working Group has initiated a survey of members regarding their experiences at CUPE events. The Safe Union Spaces Survey closes on September 28. It is imperative that members have the opportunity for their voices to be heard on this important topic:
<https://cupe.ca/participate-cupes-safe-union-spaces-survey>
- **Bargaining update**: Remember we have a break from bargaining this month and will continue in October.
- **Grievances, arbitrations, complaints**: Not too much to report in terms of official grievances but we are still working on issues such as finding out more about emergency hiring (at more than one university) and trying to resolve some outstanding grievances before taking them to arbitration.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

Sept. 9, 2021

Welcome back to campus everyone (either virtual or in-person). Not much to report as we are all busy starting classes. For covid-related information, please check on the university websites and contact your CUPE 3912 VP if you have any questions or concerns. Here are some updates:

- *Reminder*: We will be holding a **special General Meeting for a by-election** for Communications Officer. The short meeting will be on Sept. 10 at 4 pm and will be followed by an **online social**.
- *Reminder*: We are looking for a **new Communications Officer!** Although you can be nominated at the meeting, if you are interested I strongly encourage you to contact me beforehand.
- **Bargaining update**: Remember we have a break from bargaining this month and will continue in September.
- **Grievances, arbitrations, complaints**: Not too much to report in terms of official grievances other than a grievance meeting at Dal last week on hiring practises and one scheduled in a couple of weeks for the Language Centre at SMU. We are working on issues such as the safety of teaching in-person before the full vaccine mandate and emergency hiring practises.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

Sept. 2, 2021

Things are busy for us as we prepare for classes but also for union activities. Here are some updates:

- *Reminder:* We will be holding a **special General Meeting for a by-election** for Communications Officer. The short meeting will be on Sept. 10 at 4 pm and will be followed by an **online social**.
- *Reminder:* We are looking for a **new Communications Officer!** Although you can be nominated at the meeting, if you are interested I strongly encourage you to contact me beforehand.
- We have a **Facebook group**. This group provides a discussion platform for all of our members.
- Unfortunately Bev is leaving her position as **our CUPE representative** at the end of this week. She has been amazing at helping us with grievances and bargaining, and we will certainly miss her. But CUPE 3912 is strong and has excellent support from our CUPE rep (whoever it happens to be) and other CUPE staff; even the CUPE regional director has had an active role in our local this past year. Our new CUPE rep is Mike Kelly, who comes from the university sector in Nfld. I look forward to working with him starting next week.
- The Chair of the EHS Committee at Dal requests that we share a **memo sent to all Dalhousie Faculty and Staff** on Friday August 13.
- Grad students – did you know that we are associated with the **Coalition of Student Employee Union/Coalition of Graduated Employees Union (CSEU/CGEU)**? Our VP for TAs at Studley, Fallen, is a member of their coordination committee and helped organize the Annual Congress 2021: Academia, Justice and the Workplace. This included a labour conference and workshops in addition to the annual congress, which spoke to resource management, creation, and prospective mobilizing strategies respective to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic along with what economic crises and variants have arisen. Subjects covered included digital researching, international student welfare, union campaigns, neoliberalism, steward and member engagement, precarity, and uncertainty in the university along with online bargaining strategies.
- **CAUT has some courses this fall** on Organizing, Collective Bargaining, Grievance Handling and Organizing for Climate Action.
- **Bargaining update:** Our new CUPE rep will be quite busy with his new assignment in September so our next bargaining dates are in October. We had a bargaining session with SMU in which we signed off on some minor proposals and had some discussion on our major ones. We hope to get a counter proposal soon on our ideas on hiring and appointments. We are expecting a similar counter proposal from Dal, where we are still working through TA proposals. At both these universities we are also discussing the ROE (record of employment). It seems that the number of hours determined for ROE purposes at Dal is only half what it is at the Mount, but it is even greater at SMU. We are working towards making this similar for our members at all three universities.
- **Grievances, arbitrations, complaints:** BREAKING NEWS! In Bev's final days with us and only a week before the scheduled arbitration, we just reached two settlements that resolve 8 grievances at SMU. They are about job postings and hiring. Part of the settlement includes creating a template for job postings, hopefully ready in time for winter job postings.

Please contact me for further information.

In solidarity,
Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

Aug. 19, 2021

Hi CUPE 3912 members! This time I've just got a quick email before I go on vacation next week. I'll provide a regular update when I return.

- We will be holding a **special General Meeting for a by-election** for Communications Officer. Thanks Anas for all your work for CUPE 3912! The meeting will likely be on Sept. 10 at 4 pm, but this is still to be confirmed. The agenda will only include the by-election so it will be short but still important for members to attend.
- We are looking for a **new Communications Officer!** Although you can be nominated at the meeting, if you are interested I strongly encourage you to contact me beforehand. I can also tell you more about the position. The reason why we are holding a by-election rather than waiting until the November General Meeting is that this position is very important as we progress in bargaining. Please consider running for this election!

Enjoy the rest of the summer!

Karen

Aug. 13, 2021

Happy Pride! Here are some updates on universities' responses to covid, our special GMs, the NS election, grievances and bargaining. I will be on vacation the week of Aug. 23 and I may or may not send another update before then, depending on how much there is to report.

- **Special GM:** At our special GM this week we had an excellent presentation and question and answer session on health and safety issues for the return to campus from Jenna Brookfield, the Health and Safety Representative for CUPE Atlantic. She highlighted information on the CUPE website that we have put together:
 - All of CUPE's COVID-19 related resources: <https://cupe.ca/covid-19>
 - Occupational health and safety specific ones: <https://cupe.ca/covid-19-health-and-safety-practices-0>
 - A risk reassessment checklist: <https://cupe.ca/covid-19-risk-re-assessment-checklist>
 - Information on emerging variants: <https://cupe.ca/variants-concern-what-are-they-and-why-are-they-important>
 - A list of Frequently Asked Questions regarding the COVID vaccine: <https://cupe.ca/covid-19-vaccines-frequently-asked-questions>
- Last update I included CAUT's **database of almost 120 Canadian institutions' re-opening plans**. Some of the highlights from this database that CAUT provided are already out of date. Hopefully they keep this updated; things are changing rapidly as more universities apparently now have vaccine mandates.
- **NS election:** I had a few enquiries from my last update as to whether CUPE is partisan. Actually CUPE is a strong supporter of the NDP. But this week instead I have responses from the three major parties to a letter from the SSF Alliance: NDP, Liberal, Conservative.

- CAUT is hosting a webinar on **New Post-Secondary Mental Health Standard: Impacts on Students and Academic Workers**. On October 7, 2020, the *National Standard of Canada for Mental Health and Well-Being for Post-Secondary Students* was launched. According to the *Mental Health Commission of Canada*, the standard is “a set of flexible, voluntary guidelines to help post-secondary institutions support the mental health and well-being of their students.” While the development of this standard began well in advance of the COVID-19 pandemic, the realities of the pandemic have shone further light on student and academic staff mental health struggles. Join us for a CAUT-hosted webinar to review the standard, make connections between mental health for students and academic staff, and discuss how we can press administrations to provide a psychologically safe workplace. This webinar will take place on **Wednesday, August 25** from **1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. (Eastern Time)** in both English and in French. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided. Please register here: https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_gYRlc2GTQau8CVUpKcU-uw
- **Bargaining update:** We had two sessions at Dal this week and have one at SMU next week. While we did make some progress at Dal, we are realizing that scheduling full days of bargaining (hopefully in person) would be more efficient. However, our CUPE rep is very busy in general at multiple bargaining tables but especially in September with several arbitrations including one for us. Therefore, our plan is to schedule full days of bargaining at Dal and hopefully the other universities to make some substantial progress this fall. The bargaining teams have been meeting a lot recently and have focused on finalizing our financial proposals.
- **Grievances, arbitrations, complaints:** It looks like we will have a successful resolution following a grievance meeting at the Mount. It is good to know that this does happen and we appreciate cooperation with the employer to resolve grievances at early stages. At SMU we filed yet another grievance about hiring and we had a grievance meeting at the Language Centre. At Dal we are scheduling another grievance meeting. My (unofficial) records show that we have 16 active grievances across the three universities in various stages from just filed to arbitration.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

Aug. 4, 2021

I hope everyone is enjoying the summer. Here are some updates on universities' responses to covid, our special GMs, the NS election, grievances and bargaining.

- **Covid updates from universities:** We continue to meet with administrators from the universities. The recent message from Dal, which is typical of the universities, is that they will follow current guidelines with respect to masks, distancing, gathering etc. They will also encourage vaccines and testing. Please let your VP know if you have any concerns.

- CAUT has compiled a **database of almost 120 Canadian institutions' re-opening plans**, including the mode of course delivery for the Fall 2021 semester. Highlights include:
 - 44% of institutions plan for primarily in-person course delivery, 30% plan on blended course delivery, and 15% have not announced their course delivery mode plans as of June 30th, 2021.
 - No institutions plan to require vaccines to attend campus or in-person classes.
 - 12% of institutions will require at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine for students living in residences.
- **Special GM:** Our next special GM is on Aug. 10 at noon. It will focus on health and safety issues for the return to campus and will feature Jenna Brookfield, the Health and Safety Representative for CUPE Atlantic.
- **NS election:** I know my NDP candidate, Joanne Hussey, as a parent at my kids' school. We had a conversation about post-secondary education and she sent me an email about their platform. 'We know that students in Nova Scotia pay the highest tuition fees in the country. This means many people cannot afford to get a higher education. It's not fair to young people and it's not good for our economy. The Liberals have sat back and watched as tuition fees have skyrocketed. The NDP will put Nova Scotia on a path toward eliminating tuition fees, starting with reducing tuition fees at the Nova Scotia Community College to zero. We will:
 - convert government loans to grants so students are not graduating with massive debts;
 - expand access to trades, with specific focus on communities facing discrimination and underemployment;
 - **implement hard caps on university executives' compensation,**
 - expand MSI coverage to all Nova Scotia residents, including international students and their families;
 - ensure university board governance reflects the best interests of post-secondary institutions by being diverse, accountable and transparent;
 - **develop a system of portable benefits available to contract workers.**
- **Bargaining update:** We have not been in bargaining since my last update but we are still busy working on responses, counter proposals and especially our financial proposals. We have two bargaining sessions at Dal next week and at SMU the week after.
- **Grievances, arbitrations, complaints:** We are considering a couple of possible grievances at the Mount. We still have several active grievances at SMU and have a grievance meeting this week. We filed yet another grievance at Dal. Most grievances are still about hiring and some are about precedence. As always, please contact your VP if you have any concerns.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

July 22, 2021

It's election time! I am still finding this strange during summer, but we should take advantage by making our voices heard, especially about funding for post-secondary education. The first few items here relate to the NS elections.

- The **Students, Staff and Faculty Alliance** (of NS Universities) has written a letter to the party leaders about issues relevant to workers and students in post-secondary education. The CUPE 3912 executive has voted to sign this letter.
- **CUPE NS** is advocating for permanent paid sick days and asking for volunteers to help with NDP campaigns. CUPE is a founding partner in the NDP and works closely with them. There are five CUPE members running as local NDP candidates in the upcoming election (Joy Polley, Sean Foley, Tammy Jakeman, Jason Langille and Cheryl Burbidge). See the attached letter for more information about how you can get involved.
- **Bargaining update:** This week we had bargaining at both Dal and SMU. We are making progress for both and have signed off on some minor proposals. At both universities we are proposing language to strengthen academic freedom articles based on language from the collective agreements of the faculty associations. Also at both we are working on language towards continuing appointments such as having courses decided for a year in advance and internal and external posting processes. At Dal we also provided extensive proposals for TAs and markers that address issues of timing, transparency and the use of the duty form. We have our next dates for both Dal and SMU in mid-August.
- **Grievances, arbitrations, complaints:** Today we had back-to-back grievance meetings at Dal for two pairs of grievances related, all related to hiring. We continue to explain to the employer that they must always first hire members with the highest precedence who are qualified and offer them the maximum amount of work that they are entitled to.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

July 13, 2021

I hope everyone is enjoying the summer including some time off. Things seemed to have slowed down somewhat – mostly because a lot of people are on vacation. However, there still seems a lot to report to you in my update.

- I don't think I have introduced **Beverly Strachan, our new CUPE rep**. Our previous CUPE rep, Chris Sutton, transferred to a new position in Ontario. We have a new permanent CUPE rep who is currently on parental leave. Bev is a temporary rep but will be with us for a while. She was specifically selected to work with our local because of her experience with bargaining and especially complex bargaining situations at more than one bargaining table. It is a pleasure to work with her and she has already been very helpful. Welcome Bev!
- Obituary from Rory (VP for SMU Language Centre): It is with heavy hearts that the members of CUPE 3912 SMU TLC wish to share news about the passing of a wonderful colleague and great friend, Brother **Jason Doucette**. After battling a number of serious health problems, Jason passed away at his home on June 17th. A native of Prince Edward Island, Jason Doucette was a truly dedicated and talented instructor who taught EAL at

Saint Mary's University from 2003 to 2021. Jason was active in CUPE throughout his career. He was a member of the executive for CUPE 4406, the former local for SMU EAL instructors. In 2011, he served as Treasurer of CUPE 3912 and he represented the local at the National Convention. Jason was deeply respected by all his coworkers and adored by his students for his great sense of humour and extensive knowledge of language, culture, and academia. He was 47 years old, and he will be dearly missed.

- Nan McFadgen, president of CUPE NS, spoke at our **special General Meeting** yesterday about CUPE NS and its resources. Our special guest at our next special GM on Aug. 10 will be Jenna Brookfield, who works exclusively on Health and Safety for CUPE National. We will continue to have mobilization and health & safety on the agenda.
- I gave a report on the post-secondary sector at the **executive meeting for CUPE NS**.
- From CAUT: On April 22, **CAUT Council voted to censure the University of Toronto**, whose administration failed to uphold academic freedom in the decision to cancel an offer of employment to Dr. Valentina Azarova. Censure UofT, organized by a group of concerned University of Toronto faculty, has created a pledge for academic staff to publicly commit to uphold the censure until the university takes appropriate action.
- **Bargaining update:** We have not had any bargaining since my last email and this month we only have a couple of bargaining dates scheduled for SMU and Dal next week. At SMU we have had a few bargaining sessions with the employer and have only begun to discuss our proposals. We have been focusing on the appointment and hiring processes but have yet to have any meaningful discussion with the employer. After more bargaining sessions at Dal we have agreed on several proposals with the employer but still have outstanding ones, particularly wrt TAs and our common proposals. We are currently working on financial proposals to present to the employer. At the Mount the conciliator asked both sides to return to the table without a conciliator, so we hope to set dates to do that soon.
- **Grievances, arbitrations, complaints:** We continue to deal with grievances at all stages at SMU. We had a step 2 grievance meeting and are considering submitting two more grievances. At Dal we are still encountering difficulties scheduling grievance meetings. Although the timelines for grievances are clearly laid out in the collective agreements, either side can request an extension, which is often due to scheduling difficulties.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

June 30, 2021

I hope everyone is able to enjoy the summer including some time off. I am taking a staycation next week. Please contact your VP if you require any assistance.

- From CUPE Nova Scotia: We currently have **vacancies on the following CUPE Nova Scotia committees:** Political Action Committee (young worker 30 or younger), Women's Committee (young worker), Health and Safety Committee, Contracting Out and Privatization Committee, Pension Committee. If you are interested please contact: Chris Melanson (cmelanson@hotmail.com). The deadline date is July 11, 2021.

- Our next **special General Meeting** is on July 12 at 4 pm. We will continue to have mobilization and health & safety on the agenda. Please join us for our special guest the president of CUPE NS, Nan McFadgen.
- **Bargaining update:** There has been a change in the chief negotiator for the union bargaining teams and 2 of the 3 employer teams (SMU and the Mount). This is fortuitous timing as it means both sides understand the challenge such a change brings, particularly organizing proposals and counter-proposals. We are taking the time to go over the status of proposals with the employer at all universities to make sure we are on the right track. We are also spending more time with just our teams to work out details of some of our common proposals. This month we only have a couple of bargaining dates scheduled so far for July 20 and 22.
- **Grievances, arbitrations, complaints:** It seems that all of our grievance meetings at SMU and Dal are delayed, undoubtedly due to trying to coordinate schedules during the summer. We continue to work on issues that may or may not lead to grievances. Feel free to contact your VP for assistance about any issue that concerns you.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

June 22, 2021

Happy National Indigenous Peoples Day! (a bit belated)

Although it is summer, CUPE 3912 executive, staff bargaining teams and other volunteers are as busy as ever.

- We have tentative dates set for the next two **special General Meetings:** July 12 at 4 and Aug. 10 at noon. We will continue to have mobilization and health & safety on the agenda. We will also have special guests. The president of CUPE NS, Nan McFadgen, will give an address at the July meeting and the Health & Safety Representative for CUPE Atlantic, Jenna Brookfield, will join us in August.
- The **mobilization committee** met this morning for the first time joined by our CUPE rep and members of the bargaining teams for an initial brainstorming session.
- **Bargaining update:** We resume bargaining next week at SMU but have a bit of break before Dal next month. At the Mount we were disappointed that the employer filed for conciliation so early, but we are working on the way forward and hope to set new dates soon.
- **Grievances, arbitrations, complaints:** Our arbitration last week with SMU employer about unfair hiring practices was not complete so we have set two new dates in September with an extra one in December if needed. Carmel and I will be attending grievance meetings next week for the four grievances filed last week. Although we do not have any active grievances at the Mount, we do have two that are in abeyance, which means we hope to resolve them in bargaining but can take them to arbitration afterwards if they remain unresolved.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper
President, CUPE 3912
Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

June 14, 2021

Things are moving along. Although we just had our June special General Meeting, I am already planning our July and August General Meetings. They will continue to focus on mobilization during bargaining and health and safety related to covid.

- At our **special General Meeting last Friday**, we confirmed our mobilization committee and had reports from our three representative on university health and safety committees. You can contact John at the Mount, Tatiana at Dal and Howard at SMU with any questions about covid and the return to campus, which they can bring to their committee meetings.
- **Bargaining update:** This past week we had a bargaining team meeting and a bargaining session for Dal. Our next bargaining dates are at the end of June for SMU and in mid-July for Dal. Summer is generally slower as it is more difficult to coordinate schedules. We are also going to have a meeting with all bargaining teams to finalize our financial proposals and with the mobilization committee to continue our strategic planning as we continue negotiations.
- **Grievances, arbitrations, complaints:** This past week two of our VPs have been especially busy with grievances. At Dal 4 grievances were filed, two new ones and two at step two. Our VP at SMU has been very busy helping our CUPE rep prepare for an arbitration this week. All these issues deal with unfair hiring practises. An arbitration can follow a grievance that has been denied. It involves an independent arbitrator agreed upon by both sides and a hearing with witnesses. CUPE representatives handle arbitrators with the support of CUPE legal staff.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,
Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912
Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

June 8, 2021

Things are moving along fast!

- We have our next **special General Meeting this Friday at 10 am**. The short notice is that in response to members' concerns about health and safety, I wanted to have all three representative on H&S committee at this meeting, which we found out recently is only possible on Friday. There will also be an update on mobilization efforts. I hope you can come. See the poster for details.
- On the second day of the CUPE NS convention I won a prize, which I have decided to pass along to one of you as a **door prize at our special GM** (assuming we can figure out how to do this).
- CAUT will be hosting a panel discussion on *Safe Restart* on **Wednesday, June 23 from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm (Eastern Time)**. Panelists will cover the topics of the right to

refuse unsafe work, workplace accommodations, and health and safety protocols for return to work. Please register here

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_EkQPs2iQvm_PzkHg9gjIw.

- **Bargaining update:** Although we have not had any bargaining sessions in the last week, we had an excellent Dal bargaining team meeting. We were honoured when Tracey Pinder, the CUPE regional director for the Atlantic region, asked to attend our meeting along with our CUPE rep and CUPE researcher. We discussed strategic planning and especially our financial proposals.
- **Grievances, arbitrations, complaints:** At SMU our CUPE rep is busy preparing for an upcoming arbitration on an unfair hiring practise that violates the collective agreement. At Dal we are working on grievances also associated with unfair hiring practises.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

May 31, 2021

Again I seemed to have little to report to you one week and a lot the next. Part of this is due to our **Special General Meeting** last week. More details are below but the main reason for holding this meeting was to establish a **Mobilization Committee**. **PLEASE consider joining this committee!** We have space for several people. It will be a very important committee as we enter the final stages of bargaining and could have a substantial budget. So if you have lots of ideas, enjoy planning or like spending money, **please contact me!**

- Here are more details. We passed the **motion to establish a Mobilization Committee** composed of the CUPE 3912 president, the CUPE 3912 communications officer, a member from the Mount, a member from SMU, a member from Truro, a PT instructor from Dal, a TA from Studley, a TA from Sexton, plus up to 6 additional members, with consideration to balance among groups. The committee will develop a strike avert campaign with CUPE National Communications to apply to CUPE National for funding, and then follow through by mobilizing CUPE 3912 members. A second motion that passed authorizes the CUPE 3912 president to appoint members to the Mobilization Committee, with confirmation at the next Special General Meeting.
- **If you are interested at all in being part of the Mobilization Committee, please contact me ASAP.**
- Our special GM also included an **address by Brenda Austin-Smith, president, Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT)**. Brenda's talk about some of the ongoing issues in CAUT including the crisis at Laurentian University generated some discussion both immediately after and later on in our meeting.
- Although Special General Meetings are supposed to be only focused on the issues in the agenda, I allowed free discussion during the 'Good of the Union' part of our meeting. This is usually reserved for announcements and good news, but instead we had a lengthy **discussion on health and safety issues**, particularly about the return to campus. Our members spoke loud and clear – I will include this as an agenda item at our next Special General Meeting in June. Stay tuned.

- Today and tomorrow I am attending the **CUPE NS Convention** (virtually). We heard some great presentations from CUPE National president Mark Hancock, CUPE NS president Nan McFadgen, CUPE NS regional director Tracey Pinder and guest speaker Dal PhD student Tari Ajadi, who I figured out later is a CUPE 3912 member. Resolutions were passed on lobbying to implement long-term care recommendations, developing a campaign for the importance of sick days and ensuring workers compensation related to covid.
- Today is the **OCADU Librarians Day of Action** on social media and the last day of employment for the four senior librarians, who have a combined 70 years of service, knowledge and commitment to their community. They were abruptly terminated May 4 and two additional library positions were eliminated. Restructuring during the pandemic was the reason given but the decision taken at this publically funded Canadian university by-passed the involvement of the librarians, students, faculty and the OCADU Senate.
- CAUT is holding a **Safe Restart Webinar** on June 23.
- **Bargaining update Dal:** Things are going relatively well and we are making progress on several items. However, we have yet to table financial proposals, which we hope to do soon. We have two bargaining sessions scheduled next week.
- **Bargaining update SMU:** We have no dates set for SMU. Recently we asked for suggested dates but have not yet had a response.
- **Bargaining update Mount:** Those of you at the Mount will have learned from us that the employer has filed for conciliation, a process of intervention in collective bargaining by a neutral third party knowledgeable in effective negotiation procedures. We ended our last negotiating session on May 7 with the employer stating that they would respond to Union proposals and we would reciprocate. The move to file for conciliation was therefore unexpected and resulted in cancelling our next bargaining session on May 28. We want to assure everyone that your Union is committed to working within the conciliation process to achieve a renewal of the Collective Agreement that meets our members' needs. Despite the move to conciliation, we are still early on in the bargaining process. We will continue to keep you updated as we learn more about conciliation timelines.
- **Grievances, arbitrations, complaints:** The CUPE 3912 vice-presidents and I often deal with complaints from members, complaints about members, grievances, arbitrations and labour board hearings, usually with the assistance of our CUPE rep and other staff. It has been suggested that I include a description of these in my updates to show you what your union can do for you. Since my last update, we have had a grievance meeting at Dal about a department not following the collective agreement, we have helped a member deal with a complaint and we will soon submit yet another grievance about hiring at SMU. We have also recently been following up with a Labour Board complaint that we filed and are preparing for an arbitration in June, both at SMU. Due to confidentiality I cannot provide details, but I can say that grievances deal with violations of the collective agreement. I also want to add that although grievance meetings can be adversarial, often employers work with us collaboratively to resolve the grievance. If you have any concerns about your working conditions, please contact your vice-president.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

Email about special GM:

Next Thursday we have our first of several monthly Special General Meetings. These will be very important to connect with you as we progress in bargaining. We also need to accomplish some things that need to be decided by the general membership. These meetings should be shorter than the bi-annual general meetings and will only include specified items.

The main goal of this first one will be to establish a mobilization team. We also expect to have a motion to approve audits.

We also have a very special guest at this first meeting – Brenda Austin-Smith, the president of CAUT (Canadian Association of University Teachers). She will give a short address to help us put our own mobilization and bargaining efforts in a national context and will be happy to answer your questions.

If you have been waiting for momentum to get involved in helping with our member engagement and bargaining support, now is the time! Even if you only have time to participate in these meetings, your support will be very much appreciated.

See you next week!

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2021!

May 17, 2021

I skipped last week because there was nothing much to report but after some key workshops and meetings, we now have some news and upcoming events.

- Last week we had the second half of our **CUPE Mobilization Workshop** for the executive and bargaining teams. We learned a lot and generated some good ideas, which we will pass on to the mobilization committee (see below).
- *****At our executive meeting we approved a motion to hold **monthly Special General Membership Meetings** until November or the end of bargaining. These will be very important to connect more with you, our members, as we progress in bargaining, and to accomplish some things that need to be decided by the general membership. These meetings should be shorter than the bi-annual general meetings and will only include the items specified in the announcements (i.e., generally no reports). The main goal of the first one will be to establish a mobilization team and I expect it will be on the afternoon of May 27. We will provide more details, which are still being confirmed, in the next few days. If you have been waiting for momentum to get involved in helping with our member engagement and bargaining support, now is the time! Even if you only have time to participate in these meetings, your support will be very much appreciated.*****
- *****If you have a bit more time and are enthusiastic about making a difference during this round of bargaining, **please consider joining the Mobilization Committee** that we expect to establish at the meeting. This committee will have the important task of coming up with ideas and a budget for a campaign to raise our profile as we meet the challenge of discussing our proposals during bargaining. As you know, some of our high-priority

proposals as determined by the membership involve asking for very significant increases in compensation, something that is even more challenging during these times. If you are interested and want to know more, please contact me.*****

- Our **By-laws** have now been fully approved by CUPE National and are available on our website.
- The **May-June CAUT Bulletin** is available.
- **Bargaining update:** Since the last update, we had to cancel our Dal bargaining session and we had one bargaining session with the Mount. We also had an all bargaining teams meeting last week. We are working on our financial proposals including costing (estimating how much our proposals will cost the employer). Bargaining seems to be particularly slow these days, partly due to less frequent dates during the spring/summer months and partly due to issues that seem to be unrelated to our actual proposals. We hope things will pick up but the summer is usually a slow time. We have bargaining sessions scheduled at the Mount and Dal next week but still no dates set for SMU.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

May 3, 2021

I hope you are all keeping healthy and safe during our latest lockdown in this third wave, and that many of you are getting vaccinated. We continue to have discussions with the administration at the universities about your concerns on returning to campus. Like everything during this pandemic, there is still a lot of uncertainty.

- CUPE NS and the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives is holding a **webinar series** on Wednesday evenings in May and June entitled ‘Who’s taking the cake while we fight over the crumbs?’ There will be three interactive discussions on: budgets, taxes, and the public services we all rely on; why higher minimum wages are good for everyone; and equality and how it impacts our health.
- At the meeting for the Students, Staff and Faculty Alliance of NS Universities last week we discussed our **concerns about the continued increases in tuition** even during this pandemic. I will be helping to write a letter to the editor about this along with some staff from the Canadian Federation of Students.
- CAUT Council voted to **censure the Administration of the University of Toronto** in response to the Administration’s failure to resolve concerns regarding academic freedom stemming from a hiring scandal in the Faculty of Law. This means that, until the situation is satisfactorily resolved, members are asked: not to accept appointments at the University; not to accept invitations to speak or participate in academic conferences held or hosted by the University; and not to accept any distinction or honour that may be offered by the University. Censure is a rare and extremely important sanction. It is a measure of last resort used only when we are faced with serious violations of academic freedom and other principles that are fundamental to higher education. This is only the third time since 1979 that CAUT has censured an institution, and the first since the censure of First Nations University over governance concerns in 2008.

- **Bargaining update:** We resumed bargaining at Dal last week. We are making progress on Dal-specific issues but have only just started discussing some of our common proposals that focus on equity, stipend and benefits. This week we are scheduled to have sessions at both Dal and the Mount. We have no future dates set for SMU at this time.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

April 26, 2012

I hope you are all staying healthy and safe as we ride this third wave, which will hopefully crash soon. Please take care of yourselves and your families.

- At SMU, the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee continues to meet to discuss **health and safety concerns** including the return to campus this fall. Although there are still many uncertainties, they are developing protocols regarding everything from cleaning classrooms to social distancing and mask-wearing.
- There was a **Dalhousie Student Union rally** last week for a freeze in tuition. I have reached out to the DSU president expressing our support.
- Last week I attended **CAUT Council** including an information session on the Education For All campaign. Unfortunately I was not elected to the CAUT Executive. At Council there was a lot of discussion and motions on the situation at Laurentian University.
- **Bargaining update:** We resume bargaining later this week at the Mount and Dal after an extended break. We have no future dates set for SMU at this time.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

April 19, 2021

Thank-you to all of you who attended the Annual General Meeting. We have been having higher participation recently. I really appreciate all the comments and suggestions, especially our discussion on health and safety issues with the planned return to campus, which was moved close to the start of the meeting. That is what these meetings are for – discussion about issues that are relevant to YOU. I think all or most of the VPs were there and taking notes so we will bring your questions and concerns to the employers.

- At the General Meeting, **we elected new executive positions and non-executive positions.** Congratulations and welcome to newcomers! Contact information for new executive will be on the website soon and we hope to have bios for new executive in the next newsletter. Emails for executive positions stay the same and should be already linked to the correct person or will be shortly.
 - Position: name
 - ...

- We also say good-bye to executive members who are leaving us for personal reasons. **Thank-you Paul and Noel** for your work with CUPE 3912!
- I have been asked to provide an **update on the NSGEU situation at Dalhousie**. I don't know much more than you that a tentative deal was reached last week. But we have been in contact with the administration, who promises to meet with us about possible implications for our members if the situation changes.
- This morning the executive and bargaining teams had a **CUPE workshop on mobilizing members**. It was going to be on strike planning, but we learned that member mobilization should come first.
- One thing we discussed at the workshop is that **we need to tell you more about the union and what we can do for you**. We work a lot behind the scenes with concerns from individual members. Sometimes these turn into grievances and even mediation or arbitration. I don't mention these as much because they are confidential, but we often reach successful settlements including one last week after a few very challenging years. The important thing is that **we work for you** so **please contact your VP if you have any concerns about your employment**. This also includes any messages from your employer (chair or dean) that seem questionable to you.
- **REMINDER:** The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) has organized some **training and webinars on health and safety regulations during the pandemic**. They will take place in April, May and June, and include topics such as workplace inspections, psychosocial and mental health, covid-19, WHMIS, workplace chemicals, mental health, returning to the workplace and a covid update. Please contact me for more information and how to register if you are interested.
- **Bargaining update:** We still have a break from bargaining and start again the end of next week. At our workshop today, we also discussed being aware of bargaining priorities. To this end, below I copied most of the introduction to the proposals for ratification from last year, which includes our priorities as determined by you in our surveys.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

From the bargaining proposals for ratification:

PRIORITIES, as indicated by members from the survey results, will be our top consideration throughout the negotiations. For part-time instructors, the top 6 priorities are (in order):

- salary,
- continuing appointments,
- medical benefits,
- pension,
- academic freedom (depending on how priority was measured) and
- dental benefits.

For teaching assistants and markers (and similar people represented), priorities include:

- hourly rate,
- reducing unpaid, beyond the contract, working hours or “mission creep” and
- improving timelines and transparency in awarding contracts.

Some additional items that survey respondents were dissatisfied with include the lack of support and feedback for teaching courses especially the first time, the lack of respect and feeling of loneliness, and variable course load. We considered these issues but most are difficult to include in bargaining. We hope that we can address some of these issues by strengthening the language of the collective agreement, particularly with respect to ensuring adequate opportunities for orientation.

We are planning to develop bargaining proposals to address health issues related to pandemic concerns and also develop concrete proposals that speak to the interest of marginalized groups who suffer racialized, sexist, transphobic practices at the university level.

April 12, 2021

I hope you are able to join us at our **Annual General Meeting** this Friday at 2. Don't forget to RSVP, preferably before Thursday.

- Last week Carmel and I joined a **meeting of CUPE local leaders with the CUPE National President and Treasurer**, Mark Hancock and Charles Fleury. I asked a question about the Education for All campaign. It sounds like they are actively lobbying for this campaign and are particularly concerned about the situation at Laurentian University.
- **Thanks to all hourly-paid instructors who responded to our survey.** Carmel and I discussed the results and how they can inform our financial proposals in bargaining. We are still following up and will continue our discussions with the Dal bargaining team. Less than 30% of respondents think they receive a fair wage but this varied by department. About two thirds of respondents experienced changes due to the pandemic.
- CAUT has provided updated information on **stipends for contract academic staff**. The average base and top step stipend rates are \$7553 and \$8508 per course, well above our current rates. This is great timing for bargaining for us.
- Here is a link to the **CAUT April Bulletin**.
- **Bargaining update:** We have not had any bargaining sessions recently and our next one is on April 29. Please come to the Annual General Meeting for a bargaining update and feel free to ask questions. Next week the bargaining teams have a CUPE training session on strike planning. The purpose of this is not to prepare for a strike but instead to learn about how to plan for a possible strike. I am hoping to get answers to key questions such as when to hold strike votes.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

March 29, 2021

Happy Passover, Easter or Ostara or whatever holiday you celebrate at this time of year.

- At our **Annual General Meeting** on April 16, remember we will be having elections for half of the executive positions and a trustee. We also hope to add more volunteers to

committees such as the Education and Newsletter Committee and the Bargaining Support Committee. Please contact me if you are interested.

- Thanks to all the **hourly paid instructors** who completed our **survey**. We are currently compiling the results but as a preview I can say that most respondents do not think they receive a fair wage and experienced changes to their work due to the pandemic. We are planning more surveys for TAs and Markers, and per-course instructors.
- Chris, our CUPE rep, and others from CUPE would like to share an article ‘**Canadian Universities Have a Racism Problem**. We Went Deep into One. And what we found were myriad ways that people of colour struggle to find inclusion and justice. A special report.’
- **Emergency Action Needed for Laurentian University (from CAUT)**: The insolvency process at Laurentian University is moving swiftly and will conclude mid-April. Without intervention, this closed-door process—intended for private sector corporations—will determine the future of this public institution, key employer, and cultural hub in the region. We need your help to pressure governments to step up for Laurentian. Please send a letter to their Member of Parliament. Share this message with your members on social media and by email: ‘The federal government needs to work with the government of Ontario and provide emergency funding to save Laurentian University.’ Send a letter calling on your Member of Parliament to ask the federal government to show leadership to ensure that Laurentian can continue to fulfill its important mandate as a tri-cultural and bilingual university.
- **Bargaining update**: At a session with Dal today we had a presentation on the evaluation of instruction and student ratings of instruction from the Centre for Learning and Teaching. A couple of weeks ago we discussed the same topic with the Mount Student Union. These discussions illustrate some of the advantages of bargaining at three universities at the same time. Some of our common proposals deal with these issues and it seems that at least one university is also reflecting on how to update assessments of instruction. By considering these proposals at all three bargaining tables, we can share and reflect on what could work at all universities and which options might contribute more to fair working conditions for our members.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

March 22, 2021

Happy Spring! I am enjoying the first flowers, birds singing, bike rides and pussy willows. I hope you are enjoying the good weather too.

- Remember our **Annual General Meeting** is on April 16. See our poster for details.
- In a few weeks we are planning a **quick poll on the actual numbers of hours worked**. To help you estimate the number of hours that you work, we suggest that you keep track of the number of hours that you work for each activity associated with teaching (e.g., class time, grading, emails, office hours, prep time) for the next two weeks. (I have

actually been doing this for almost 5 years for paid and unpaid activities related to things like supervising students, research activities, union work and teaching; it can be useful.)

- Please let us know if you are participating in union activities such as the **SMU Focus Groups in Strategic Planning**. It is difficult for the union executive to be everywhere so it would be very helpful to get a summary of what is discussed at these meetings, particularly for bargaining. You can be the eyes and ears of CUPE 3912.
- **From CUPE:** If you are looking for extra work, CUPE is seeking applicants to perform occasional temporary administrative secretarial work in their Atlantic Offices.
- **From CAUT:** Laurentian University in Sudbury, Ontario is the first public university to declare insolvency. Please take a moment to lend your voice by asking the federal government to step up. The federal government can assist through its support for Official Languages and Indigenous education, research and core operating funds. It can show leadership by working with the provinces to develop and fund a plan for post-secondary education as it has for childcare, housing and health care. Please take two minutes to [sign this letter](#). (Note that I would think that PT instructors at Laurentian are particularly vulnerable in this situation.)
- On Friday I attended the **CAUT Negotiators Forum**. There was a particularly interesting presentation from American labour activist Jane McAlevey. She emphasized the need for participation to have power at the bargaining table and build majorities to win against a tough employer. She uses quite different tactics such as having large open negotiations with more than 100 union members at each bargaining session and a committee for every proposal.
- **Bargaining update:** We had to cancel last week's bargaining session due to illness and this week we didn't have any scheduled. We are currently scheduling bargaining sessions for April and May. Following up from the last item, Jane McAlevey also mentioned how she never signs ground rules. This round of bargaining we did not sign any ground rules either. Ground rules are usually introduced by the employer and include items like not tabling additional proposals or speaking about any of the proposals to the media and sometimes to our members. Although we usually do abide by these rules, we want to be flexible and keep options open. In particular we are working towards more open and transparent communication with you, our members.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

March 15, 2021

I seem to only have a few items this week.

- **We need more volunteers from the Mount** to fill vacancies on university committees and our bargaining support committee. Please contact me or Larissa if you are interested.
- We distributed a **survey to the hourly paid instructors at Dalhousie**. This quick poll focuses on their wage and number of hours actually worked. If you received this poll, please help us help you by filling it out.

- **Bargaining update:** We were bargaining last week at the Mount and Dalhousie. I thought I'd take this opportunity to discuss more about what goes on at the table. It seems like a lot of bargaining involves back and forth discussion and proposals, often about specific wording. Sometimes language disagreements might seem trivial, but the difference between something like 'could' or 'shall' can be substantial. Another aspect of bargaining is the LOU or MOU (letter or memorandum of understanding). Sometimes if both sides want to see progress towards a proposal but don't think it can be accomplished during the current round of bargaining, they set up a LOU/MOU to set up a committee to discuss the issue within a certain time period. The discussion can then lead to changes in the next round of bargaining. We then have to decide if or what we can achieve this round of bargaining and what could go in an LOU/MOU and how it will be followed up. This week we'll be back at the Mount and it looks like we have a week off next week.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

March 8, 2021

It's International Woman's Day! Dave has written a message about International Woman's Day and posted it on our various social media sites. Also note that we are addressing related equity issues in bargaining such as pregnancy and parental leave.

- We are planning our next **newsletter** and **welcome submissions for articles** from you. If you have an idea for an article about bargaining issues or anything union-related, please contact me or send it to me by March 19.
- The CAUT (Canadian Association of University Teachers) **Council Meeting** is online again this spring April 21-23. Although it is not the same as in person, it is still an interesting experience if you would like to know more about CAUT. There is also no cost. Please contact me if you are interested.
- We are working on **quick polls or surveys related to bargaining issues**. Some of these are for specific groups within CUPE 3912, whereas others will be for all members. Dave has had training in communications and has developed these surveys, which are then sent to myself and others for feedback. We also get feedback from our CUPE rep, someone at CUPE Research and the bargaining teams. So there is a lengthy process behind making these quick polls effective at getting the information we need for bargaining. If you receive one or more of these polls, PLEASE take a few minutes to complete them to help us help you during bargaining. A high turnout for these polls means a lot to us in terms of member engagement.
- **Bargaining update:** We have been having some good discussions at some of the bargaining tables. In particular, last week at the Mount some members of the bargaining team presented the results of a survey and report on office space and related facilities. This report was the result of an appendix of the Collective Agreement negotiated last time to look into office space. The results are helping inform bargaining issues and also issues related to occupational health and safety. This week we're bargaining at both Dal and the Mount.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

March 1, 2021

Happy March! As I look into my backyard from my home office and see the rain coming down washing the snow away, I can see why I find it the most difficult month. Although the days are getting longer, the weather is still not warm enough to really enjoy bike rides or see flowers. It may seem even worse this year as we are still in the pandemic with only the hint of the vaccine coming to most of us this year. As we trudge along in this long month, I think perseverance may be the key as we go through multiple bargaining sessions and continue to meet with administration to discuss how universities might open more as we start to see the end (?) of this pandemic. I hope you all continue to take care and find ways of treating yourselves or spending extra time with family and friends, even if it is virtual.

- At **SMU the Employee Recognition Celebration** included some of our members honoured for 15 years affiliation. Congratulations!
https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b2a91ee620b85a68eb2ef66/t/602fdd788f933a3afa1542e9/1613749624653/ERA_Program_Digital+Version_2021+%283%29.pdf
- From the NS Federation of Labour: Join us for an **online Town Hall on Child Care** Tuesday, March 2nd starting at 7 pm. We have an opportunity now not only to rebuild the child care sector but also to keep on building until we have child care that is accessible and affordable no matter where you live. Nova Scotia can be a leader on this front with bold steps and the right choices. Click the link to register: <http://nsndp.ca/child-care-town-hall>. Speakers include: Claudia Chender MLA for Dartmouth South, Christine Saulnier, Director Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives-Nova Scotia, and Tammy Findlay, Associate Professor and Dept. Chair Political and Canadian Studies, Mount Saint Vincent University. This event has been organized by the Nova Scotia NDP Labour committee and the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour. <http://nslabour.nationbuilder.com/>
- We have received the most recent contract information from all universities, which allows us to assess the **changes in the number of CUPE 3912 contracts** this year compared to previous years. Compared to last winter term, there were 12% fewer contracts at the Mount (compared to a 35% reduction in fall) and overall increases in PT and TA contracts at Dal and PT contracts at SMU. However, there were fewer contracts for PT faculty in Agriculture and for hourly paid instructors at Dalhousie compared to winter term last year.
- **Bargaining update:** Not much to report except we have a half day of bargaining at the Mount next week when we hope to hear the employer's feedback on our proposals.
- Somewhat related to bargaining, I was invited to and attended the **Dalhousie Faculty Association's annual lecture series on bargaining**. There were two speakers on collective bargaining during the pandemic: David Westwood, president of the Dalhousie Faculty Association, and Larry Savage, chief negotiator for the Brock University Faculty Association. One thing of interest that Larry discussed is transparency in communication about bargaining with members. This is something we have discussed for our bargaining

teams as well. Current practice ranges from not revealing anything that is discussed at the bargaining table to putting all proposals and counter proposals on the website, as is done by CUPE 3903 at York. There are reasons not to be quite so revealing, but Larry does advocate for greater transparency. For CUPE 3912, we are working at being more transparent, but I also recognize that it is best to do this gradually and strike a balance. We are figuring this out as we go. So for now I will continue to provide bargaining updates to you as we progress with our negotiations. I also hope you will help us by responding to quick polls we are planning. **Membership engagement is key to successful bargaining.**

- After the lecture I asked Larry a question; during his reply he mentioned his **research on bargaining and per-course instructors**. I followed up with an email discussion and he provided this link to his study: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/346999483_Interrogating_the_Relationship_Between_Bargaining_Structures_and_Bargaining_Outcomes_for_Contract_Academic_Faculty_in_Ontario It's a good read about different ways per-course instructors are represented in bargaining. The main conclusion is that the outcome is never satisfactory because we are precarious! My goal for bargaining is to work within the system we have to get the best working conditions we can for all of you.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

Feb. 22, 2021

Welcome back after break. Not too much that is new this week.

- **If you are feeling overwhelmed** with extra work because of the pandemic or with emails from students at all times including weekends and holidays, here are a couple of suggestions. 1) Try asking the chair of your department for more TA or marker hours. 2) Set your own expectations and boundaries for contact with students; tell them when they can expect answers from your emails (e.g., within x days and not on weekends). These ideas are from a discussion I had with Dal admin this morning, but I would think that this could apply to the other universities as well. There is funding to help faculty (at least at Dal) so feel free to ask. Unfortunately they will not provide extra compensation directly, but they seem willing to provide extra help in other ways. Also please contact me or your CUPE VP if you wish at any time and we can bring your concerns to admin.
- The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) has organized some **training and webinars on health and safety regulations during the pandemic**. They will take place in April, May and June, and include topics such as workplace inspections, psychosocial and mental health, covid-19, WHMIS, workplace chemicals, mental health, returning to the workplace and a covid update. Please contact me for more information and how to register if you are interested. Note that I have already informed our representatives on Health and Safety Committees at the universities; I hope they will attend on our behalf.

- **Bargaining update:** We only had one bargaining session at SMU last week and our next one is at the Mount next week. Much of what we are discussing at the table in the early stages is related to past and ongoing grievances. There are two main sources of ideas for bargaining proposals: priorities of our members, which we get from our survey, and grievances. Proposals related to grievances are usually non-financial and often relate to different interpretations of the collective agreement from the employer and union (this is why they result in grievances). For us this time they are mostly related to discipline and job postings. These issues often seem to be less important to most members, yet by protecting a few members through grievances and changing the language of the collective agreement, we are protecting all members from possible unfair treatment. We have some bargaining sessions scheduled for March and April. Progress is slow but it is a challenge to bargain at all three universities at once.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

Feb. 16, 2021

I hope you are enjoying the winter break. There are a few things this week.

- The CUPE NS website has information for several **awards, scholarships, and bursaries for CUPE affiliated members**. The deadline to apply is April 15. The awards are for members or children of members attending university in 2020-2021; an individual and a committee for significant contributions to health and safety; an African or Indigenous Nova Scotian student; Steward of the Year Award; and individuals or locals that promote literacy.
- The next **Coalition of Student Employee Unions Membership Council meeting** will be on Sunday March 7 at 2 pm ET. Grad student CUPE 3912 members are welcome to register. We can have one more delegate who can vote, but we can have additional non-voting members participate. There are also [virtual] happy hours for socials. You can also get involved in subcommittees. Contact Fallen, our VP for TAs at Studley, for more details.
- Below is information about a **survey on mental health**. This survey includes six professional groups across sectors and takes an intersectional gender lens that focuses on family and not just work, which is somewhat atypical. The survey takes 15-20 minutes and they offer an honorarium for a longer interview.
- The **latest edition of the CAUT Bulletin** includes articles on disabilities and accomodation, academic freedom and contract academic faculty, copyright and pensions.
- **Bargaining update:** We have had a bit of a break from bargaining so I'll give a more long-term update. The first step in negotiations is to exchange proposals, which we have now done at all three universities. Then there is the long process of asking questions, suggesting counter-proposals and hopefully coming to an agreement on some of these while deciding not to pursue others. We are now at the start of this stage and are just beginning to ask each other questions to clarify proposals. We have tentatively agreed on only a few very minor proposals, most of which involve things like editing. Some of our

common proposals such as a major increase in salary, pension and other benefits are financial proposals and come much later in the process, typically after dealing with all non-financial proposals. We do not expect to even start negotiating financial proposals anytime soon. Therefore, the bargaining teams are still doing background research including exploring different options for a pension plan. This week and next we only have bargaining at SMU, with the next dates at Dal and the Mount in March.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

Feb. 9, 2021

I hope everyone is enjoying the snow! Just a few things to report this week.

- Our 2021 **Annual General Meeting** will be online at 2 pm on April 16. We will have elections and by-law amendments. More details will be provided closer to the time.
- **Bargaining update:** We had one bargaining session each at SMU and Dal last week; another at Dal was cancelled partly because of weather. We continue to discuss various proposals at each university. Bargaining at three universities at the same time gives us a comparative vision of the perspective of the employers. For example, we have common proposals to address equity issues. Our goal is to strengthen language to protect our members against harassment and discrimination. Notably we want to make sure that provincial and university policies are included in the collective agreement wherever possible to inform our members and alert them to details of these policies. One of the employers agrees with us and included even more language outlining various university policies on these issues. Another employer instead proposed to remove the language we have from the collective agreement rather than expand it further. This week we have a break from bargaining but the teams continue to prepare for future bargaining sessions.
- At Laurentian University, the administration declared that the institution is insolvent and filed for court protection under the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act. This situation threatens access to education, campus jobs, and the autonomy of a public university. **The Laurentian University Faculty Association is asking for your help.** Act now by [sending a letter](#) to Ontario and federal leaders demanding funding to secure the future of Laurentian University, and respect institutional autonomy, including governance. This critical situation has been caused by a steady erosion of public funding and mismanagement of funds, made possible by a lack of transparent and accountable institutional governance. Despite this, the Ontario government is proposing increased government oversight instead of committing to increasing public funding and respect for collegial governance.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

Feb. 1, 2021

It's **African Heritage Month!** I hope you will be able to participate in the events at the universities.

- Early February is also the time when we get information from the universities about part-time contracts and our members. At this time we try to identify **new members** and send them our **CUPE 3912 brochure**. I've added it here in case you haven't received one yet or want to refresh your member on what we do.
- We are still looking for a **volunteer from the Mount to help understand university finances**. Please contact me if you are interested.
- We are also looking for **Dal instructors in Nursing, Physiotherapy & Occupational Therapy, and Music & Theatre** to share your thoughts on salary and working conditions. Please contact me to let us know what you would like us to accomplish during bargaining.
- **REMINDER:** CUPE National is encouraging all members to complete the first ever **national survey on workplace violence and harassment in Canada**. Eliminating violence and harassment in the workplace is and will always be a top priority for CUPE. The information gathered from this survey will go a long way to help unions, employers and policymakers create safer workplaces for everyone.
- The Students, Staff and Faculty Alliance put out a **press release about the liberal leadership candidates** 'Liberal Platforms get Failing Grade from Students, Staff and Faculty'.
- We are working on a date for the next Annual General Meeting (AGM), which is typically in early April. The **AGM will include elections for executive positions and also some minor by-law amendments**.
- **Bargaining update:** Last week we had team meetings to prepare for bargaining at SMU and Dal this week. We had our second session with the Mount last week at which we discussed definitions of terms that we hope will clarify our collective agreement. Overall we are still in the early stages of bargaining and have not yet had a response from any of the universities on most of our common proposals. See the bargaining page on our website for more details.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

Jan. 25, 2021

- We are still **looking for volunteers from the Mount** to help with research for bargaining for the Bargaining Support Committee and to serve on committees such as the Employment Equity Committee.
- This time we have the extended **joint statement at Dalhousie**.
- Let me know if you are interested in attending the **CUPE Human Rights Conference:** 'Registration is now open for CUPE's virtual Human Rights Conference, "Human Rights in the Time of COVID: Organizing for Change."' The conference will take place online

March 1-4, 2021, from noon to 4 p.m. Eastern Time. [Register now](#) Join CUPE members from across the country to explore human rights concerns in the context of COVID-19, and to strategize on how to create a more just post-pandemic world. Participants will learn how to build stronger, more equity-focused locals, and how to bargain for equality in the workplace. The conference will feature panels, guest speakers, and the opportunity for members to voice their experiences and share their thoughts on how to move justice and equity forward in and outside our union. Early Bird registration closes end of day February 5, 2021. ‘

- Several forums have been scheduled for the **Employment Systems Review at Dalhousie**: <https://dal.u.sharepoint.com/sites/mydal/dc/hr/SitePages/Employment%20Systems%20Review.aspx>. ‘The forums that may be of most interest to CUPE members are the one for part-time academics on March 12th and the one for TAs, markers, and demonstrators on March 9th. The details and registration links are on the webpage.’ A few of the CUPE 3912 executive have already participated in this process. I hope some of you can as well.
- **Bargaining update**: Last week we had team meetings to prepare for bargaining at SMU and the Mount. We had our first session with SMU last week at which we exchanged proposals. This week we have our second session with the Mount. See the bargaining page on our website for more details.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

Jan. 18, 2021

Happy New Year! Our new CUPE rep (Chris) commented to me that locals in the university sector have the advantage of being able to draw upon expertise in a lot of different areas for assistance. We are seeing this in action with our new **Bargaining Support Committee**. Marcia, Belinda, Erin, Hammad and Keith have been taking on tasks such as reporting on University Town Halls, reading faculty union collective agreements, researching the impact of a recent arbitration on the use of student evaluations and understanding university finances. We are working on how to use the results of their research in bargaining, including communicating the information to you. Thanks again to our volunteers!

- Let me know if you would like to volunteer for our Bargaining Support Committee or our Communications Team. We are particularly **looking for someone from the Mount with financial or accounting expertise** to help understand university finances at the Mount and for **volunteers with experience or interest in graphic arts or making videos** to help with communication.
- **Bargaining update**: We continued bargaining at Dalhousie this past week; we are making progress but it’s slow. We continue to put pressure on the employer for timely awarding of TA contracts. We are pleased that the employer agrees with us on including or referring to policies such as for domestic violence in the collective agreement. This week we have team meetings to prepare for bargaining at SMU (starting this week) and

the Mount (2nd session this week). See the bargaining page on our website for more details.

- The **Education for All campaign** upcoming launch is taking place online on January 21, 2021, at 2:00 pm (Halifax time). ‘With the pandemic shining a spotlight on long-simmering issues in the post-secondary education sector, CAUT has joined forces with the Canadian Federation of Students, the Canadian Union of Public Employees, and the Public Service Alliance of Canada to develop the Education for All campaign. Together, our combined memberships of more than one million students and workers are putting forward a vision of a more affordable, accessible, high quality, publicly-funded post-secondary education system in Canada, a system that is ready to take on the challenges of today and tomorrow. To launch this broad-based coalition campaign, representatives from each organization will come together on January 21 to share this vision and talk about how universities and colleges are key to a just recovery. Registration for the event is available [here](#).’
- We are extending the **joint statement at Dalhousie** to the rest of this academic year, including the policy of not using student evaluations to assess teaching. It should be available soon. Thank-you to the Dalhousie Faculty Association for bringing this motion to Senate.
- This past week I participated in the CUPE NS Executive Meeting as a representative of the university sector and in the CAUT Forum for Presidents.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

Dec. 21, 2020

Happy Solstice to our 4000+ members! I often get asked the question, how many members are in CUPE 3912? The answer is usually that it is challenging to figure out and that it depends how it is calculated. Our by-laws say that we are members for up to three years after teaching our last course. We recently did some calculations and found that we have over 4000 members according to this definition.

Congratulations to Erica Fischer, our new VP for part-time instructors at SMU, who was elected at our special General Meeting on Friday. We also appointed some more members to our committees but **we could always use more volunteers** so please contact me if you are interested. Here are some other news items:

- We are looking for a volunteer who works at Dalhousie to represent CUPE 3912 on a new **Presidents Advisory Committee on Sexualized Violence**. Please contact me if you are interested.
- At Dalhousie University, we want to let you know or remind you that **part-time instructors** (and full-time) **can request to increase the number of TA hours** for their course. We have been told that such requests are usually granted. Dal admin wants to remind our members that "Part-time academics may require additional equipment, software and/or Teaching Assistant support. Those seeking additional equipment, resources and support should contact their Department Chair/Head/Director."

- At **Saint Mary's University**, we have heard about a **\$100 office allowance**. We don't know too much about this but have been told that it is still available through a request to the department chair.
- There is not much to report for our **bargaining update**. We had one initial meeting at the Mount, during which we just exchanged proposals. We have 2-4 bargaining dates scheduled at each university so far for January and February. Along with prep dates, your bargaining teams will be very busy in 2021!
- You have probably heard about that the **Canada Revenue Agency has simplified how employees can claim home office expenses** on their personal income tax return for 2020. Here is a link we have found that might help you figure this out: <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/news/2020/12/simplifying-the-process-for-claiming-a-deduction-for-home-office-expenses-for-employees-working-from-home-due-to-covid-19.html> CAUT also sent a memo about this with more information – see below.
- The CBC Maritime Noon show on December 16 had an information and call-in session on the **challenges of online education for faculty and students** featuring Dalhousie Faculty Association President Dave Westwood and Clancy McDaniel from Students Nova Scotia. Jean Sauvageau, a past president from Faculty Associations of New Brunswick, also spoke and highlighted the concerns for part-time instructors. (See <https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-38/clip/15814620>, the segment begins approx. 20 minutes in to the show.)
- The Students, Staff and Faculty Alliance of Nova Scotia sent Minister Metlege Diab a **letter outlining concerns over the fees international students are required (by some universities) to pay for self-isolating** on their arrival in Nova Scotia.
- The latest online edition of the Canadian Association of University Teachers' monthly publication, the **CAUT Bulletin**, is available for download in a PDF version on the CAUT website [here](#).

Enjoy a safe and healthy holiday season.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in **2021!**

Dec. 9, 2020

Happy December! I hope you can all find some time to enjoy the holiday season. This week I have an important announcement about a by-election at a special General Meeting next week and the first of a series of quick polls that we are planning during bargaining to continue to get your input and feedback.

- Carlos, our VP for SMU, has resigned due to family reasons. Thank-you Carlos for your hard work and dedication! Next week we will hold a **by-election for a new VP** for SMU at a **special General Meeting**. Please see the poster for more details. We may also include some other items on the agenda, but the meeting will be very short because it will not include the usual reports. Don't forget to RSVP for the meeting to receive the link.
- We are always looking for **volunteers for our committees**, especially the communications and bargaining support teams. The special General Meeting next week

would be an excellent opportunity to appoint more volunteers to these committees, so please let me know if you are interested.

- We are seeking your input on an issue that is included in our bargaining proposals and is currently discussed during this pandemic: student ratings of instruction. Please complete **our quick poll** when you read this (takes less than 5 minutes) to provide your feedback on student evaluations.
- On this same topic, we have been information that **student evaluations are going to continue to be optional in winter term at the Mount.**
- Also at the **Mount**, there may have been some miscommunication about **multi-access delivery courses** (both online and in-person). In-person course delivery is the preference of the instructor, not a requirement, and is not encouraged by the university or us because the course also needs to have an online option and a contingency plan for online delivery (i.e., extra work).
- More from the **Mount**: we are looking for a volunteer to serve on the **Harassment and Discrimination Committee**. Please contact Larissa if you are interested.
- A reminder to TAs and PT instructors at Dal with TAs to complete the **TA Duties form** for winter term. We now have a digital version.
- CUPE National has asked us to share the **world recognized documentary on fighting against environmental racism** "There's Something in the Water" on Netflix. Dalhousie Faculty of Health Associate Professor Ingrid Waldron co-produced the documentary with actor/filmmaker Elliot Page and Ian Daniel (who co-directed the film), as well as Julia Sanderson.
- I almost forgot the **bargaining update**, but that's because we haven't had any bargaining sessions since my last email. Next bargaining is at the Mount.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

Nov. 30, 2020

It's now almost December and bargaining has begun in earnest at one university. Here is an update along with some other news and events.

- **Bargaining update:** At Dalhousie, we had three bargaining sessions on Nov. 23, 26 and 27. Bargaining this past week consisted mostly of asking and answering questions for clarification. We are pleased that the employer is eager to understand our motivation behind our proposals and we are hoping to come to an agreement on several non-monetary issues. The union explained the importance of key issues such as ensuring grad students are not asked to teach or TA extra hours to finish their degrees in a timely manner and making this year's temporary ban on using student evaluations for discipline permanent because they are biased. Our next dates will be in January. We start bargaining at the Mount on Dec. 11 and we are still setting dates at SMU.
- We now have a **bargaining tab on our website**. Check it out for information on bargaining team members, bargaining dates and more.

- One thing we learned in bargaining is that **if TAs are expected to work more hours**, their supervisor can apply to have the additional hours authorized. We encourage you to ask your supervisor to do so if you are in that situation.
- We are looking for a **volunteer at the Mount** to be the CUPE representative for a new advisory committee on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility for Mount Saint Vincent University. If you are interested, please email Larissa, VP for the Mount, or myself for more information including the terms of reference.
- I have been asked to share information on **Dalhousie's Census** with you. It is important for PT instructors, TAs, markers and demonstrators to be counted. Starting today, Dalhousie will kick off its sixth annual census. The census is confidential, and it takes only a few minutes to complete. 'The census data collected will help Dal make informed decisions on policy and planning issues to help foster a respectful and inclusive culture. It is particularly important for us to understand who makes up our part time faculty population at Dalhousie.' To complete the census, visit dal.ca/BeCounted. Student employees should complete the student census. A [PDF printable copy](#) of the census is also available.
- The [CSEU \(Coalition of Student Employee Unions\) Membership Council meeting](#) will be held December 5th (virtually). Each Member Union is entitled to two voting delegates and any number of non-voting delegates. Contact our VP for TAs Studley Campus for more details.
- Mason Carter, student at King's, gave an excellent account of online learning during an interview on CBC Maritime Noon on Nov. 25.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

Nov. 18, 2020

Hello! I had hoped to share information about the General Meeting earlier, but I have been busy with various meetings, ongoing grievances and bargaining! Below are more details, but please pay particular attention to the opportunity to become involved in our Bargaining Support Committee.

- At the General Meeting, **we elected new executive positions, non-executive positions and bargaining team members**. Thank-you to all candidates. Congratulations and welcome to all newcomers. Contact information for new executive will be on the website soon and we hope to have bios for new executive in the next newsletter. Emails for executive positions stay the same and should be already linked to the correct person or will be shortly.
 - Position: name
 - ...
- We also say good-bye to executive members who are leaving us for full-time work elsewhere. **Thank-you Daryl, Clare and Amanda** for your work with CUPE 3912! Also **thanks to Gregg and Julie** for their help on the bargaining teams!

- Also at the General Meeting, a motion was passed to establish a **Bargaining Support Committee**. This type of committee is common during bargaining for CUPE locals and faculty unions. Committee members assist the bargaining teams by conducting research at the three universities doing things like graphing the salaries and increases in salary of senior administrators, reading through the university strategic plan and making notes on the relevance to CUPE 3912 members, and participating in one or more Town Hall sessions to see if there is anything relevant to our bargaining. (Tasks have yet to be determined; these are just my ideas for now.) Being on this committee can take as much or as little time as you would like and **is a great way to get involved without a large time commitment**. If you are interested, please contact me.
- Last week we had some bad and good news. The bad news is that **our CUPE National representative, Mary Fougère**, has been assigned to other locals and **will be leaving us** at the end of this week. I have worked very closely with Mary since I became president and she has become extremely valuable for all her assistance with grievances and especially bargaining preparations. Thanks to Mary for everything! The good news is that **we will have a new representative, Chris Sutton**. I got a chance to meet him at our bargaining session on Monday and have already had discussions with him about grievances and bargaining. Mary is leaving some big shoes to fill but I think Chris will fit them nicely as well. Welcome Chris!
- **Bargaining update:** We started bargaining with Dalhousie administration on Monday. The first session simply involved exchanging proposals so there is not much to report. We will have another session with Dal next Monday. We are scheduling dates with SMU and the Mount. Also, soon we may have something to report for the Language Centre bargaining.
- **Message from CUPE National:** As you are aware the 2019 National Convention unanimously adopted a resolution to develop a National Anti-Racism Strategy. Work on this resolution is ongoing and has now reached the consultation stage. We are requesting that you reach out to Black, Indigenous, and Racialized members of your local to participate in the consultation for the Atlantic and Maritimes Regions which will take place on November 23, 2020. Please see the invitation for more information on this important initiative. (Note the deadline was Nov. 13 but you could probably ask to RSVP late if there is space.)
- **CAUT:** I am very busy with CAUT events including a Meeting for Presidents, Nova Scotia Bargaining Check-In and Atlantic Regional Networking. Tomorrow I will be meeting with MP Andy Filmore as part of CAUT lobbying for Virtual Parliamentary Days, next week I will attend CAUT Council and in a few weeks I will participate in the Forum for Senior Grievance Officers.
- **Message from a past president:** I just wanted to send out to message to the current members of CUPE 3912 that Brother Michael Earle passed away on November 9, 2020 at the age of 81. Mike was the long term treasurer and also a member of the first organizing committee of EWOC (Education Workers of Canada) in the late 1980s which eventually became CUPE 3912 in 1995. Online condolences can be made by visiting: www.atlanticfuneralhomes.com. Memorial donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Society or the charity of one's choice. Sincerely, Barb Moore, Past President, CUPE 3912

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,
Karen Harper
President, CUPE 3912
Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

Nov. 4, 2020

Happy Winter! Although it seems like it should be near the end of term looking out the window, we still have several weeks left including fall term break next week. I hope the break will give you more time to participate in our **General Meeting**. Please consider running for election for one of the positions or serving on one of our committees. This will be just before we start bargaining for collective agreements for PT instructors and TAs so be sure to participate for updates. Don't forget to RSVP for the meeting to receive the link.

- Today I talked to someone at Dalhousie University administration about the **effect of possible DFA job action on our members**. Although a strike is no longer imminent, I wanted to provide some answers to questions you have been asking. Job action is not likely until winter term. If there is job action with DFA, our members – part-time instructors, TAs and markers – will continue to be employed and be paid. This will not change even if classes are cancelled, which they most likely will be but not necessarily in all programs. I will have another discussion about which courses would be cancelled shortly before any job action.
- I also discussed the increase in workload that many of you are experiencing. I was told to encourage anyone **feeling overworked** to reach out to their department chair to ask for additional resources and to let you know that the Centre for Learning and Teaching is available to help you. Although this is for Dalhousie, I expect the same applies to SMU and the Mount.
- We assessed the **changes in the number of CUPE 3912 contracts** this year compared to previous years using information provided by the universities. This fall, there were 35% fewer contracts at the Mount, a reduction in the number of contracts in some faculties at Dal (overall 16%) and an increase for PT instructors at SMU and TAs at Dal. At Dal, the Faculties of Agriculture and Science were particularly affected (decrease in number of contracts by about one half and one third, respectively).
- CUPE National is encouraging all members to complete the first ever **national survey on workplace violence and harassment in Canada**. Eliminating violence and harassment in the workplace is and will always be a top priority for CUPE. The information gathered from this survey will go a long way to help unions, employers and policymakers create safer workplaces for everyone.
- CAUT summarized **2020 enrolment data** for 16 public universities released by the Association of Atlantic Universities. Full-time enrolment (undergraduate and graduate) declined by -1.3% (-1,023) year-over-year. Full-time visa students declined -6.6% (-1,264) during the same period. Full-time first-year student enrolment is down -10.5% year-over-year (-1,477); however, there was a significant increase in part-time enrolment of 19.6% (+2,438). Significant drops in full-time enrolment were seen at Cape Breton University (-25.8%), NSCAD (-16.2%) and Université Ste Anne (-12.2%). Smaller decreases at St. Thomas University, (-4.1%), **Saint Mary's University** (-3.6%), St. Francis Xavier University (-3.2%), and Acadia University (-2.7%). Some have

experienced increases: UPEI (4.2%), **Dalhousie University** (3.8%), **Mt. St. Vincent** (3.3%), Mount Allison University (1.1%). Largest decreases in full-time international student enrolment were at Cape Breton University (-27.9%), Université Ste. Anne (-22%), NSCAD University (-17.5%), Acadia University (-13.7%) and **Saint Mary's University** (-12.3%).

- For the **collective agreements** this time I thought I'd include what is at the beginning, the preamble or purpose – see below.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

Collective agreement language at the start (before definitions or union recognition):

Dalhousie

PREAMBLE

The parties to this Agreement share a desire:

- (a) To establish and maintain an orderly collective bargaining relationship between the Employer and the Union;
- (b) To establish an effective and harmonious working relationship between the Employer and its employees represented by the Union;
- (c) To set for an Agreement covering wages, benefits, and other working conditions which shall supersede all previous agreements, arrangements, practices, or terms and conditions of employment between the Employer and employees represented by the Union.

APPLICATION

The application of the provisions of this Agreement apply only, except where otherwise indicated, to interactions between the Employer and employees governed by the Agreement by virtue of the certification order, recognition clause and definition of Employee.

SMU

PARTIES TO THE AGREEMENT

This Agreement, hereinafter referred to as the “Agreement” is entered into this 18th day of June, 2019 by and between Saint Mary’s University, a body corporate, incorporated under the laws of the province of Nova Scotia, hereinafter referred to as the “Employer” and the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 3912, hereinafter referred to as the “Union.”

GENERAL PURPOSE

The parties mutually recognize that the purpose of the University, as defined in the Saint Mary's University Act, 1970, is to provide a facility for higher education through teaching, research and community service. Both parties agree to work cooperatively towards developing the quality and effectiveness of the education provided by the University by maintaining a cooperative, collegial and harmonious relationship, which is characterized by mutual respect. Thus, this agreement sets forth terms and conditions of employment for part-time faculty and provides a method for settling differences, which may arise from time to time between the parties.

Mount

There is no preamble or purpose section of the collective agreement.

Oct. 23, 2020

I hope you are all doing well in the middle of the fall semester.

- Our fall General Meeting is coming soon (Nov. 13) and we are **recruiting for positions on the executive, bargaining teams and committees**. There are many volunteer possibilities with variable amounts of work so please consider becoming more involved! You can contact me with any questions.
- Something I have been working on lately is figuring out how we are represented on **university committees**. If you are a representative on a university committee and have not heard from me lately, please contact me.
- Many of you have been wondering about our colleagues in the **Dalhousie Faculty Association** after hearing that they have a strike mandate and it appears that conciliation talks have not been very successful. If they do take job action including going on strike, we can certainly support their efforts that do not involve refusing to work but we cannot advocate anything that can be perceived as illegal strike action. In other words, we cannot tell you not to teach, but we can suggest that you join DFA pickets when you are not teaching (however that might look in the pandemic world). Another thing to note here is that last time there was a DFA strike, the university cancelled all classes (even the ones taught by our members). We think that our members would continue to be paid if this happens but we could have this confirmed if this happens.
- I was interviewed on the possibility of a DFA strike for **The Watch magazine** from King's College <https://watchmagazine.ca/2020/10/20/conciliation-breaks-down-between-dfa-and-university/>
- The latest issue of the **Canadian Association of University Teachers Bulletin** includes articles on Rising against racism and Indigenizing the academy.
- For Fair Employment Week, I wrote a **letter to each of the university presidents** about our working conditions and how the pandemic has highlighted the precarity of our situation.
- Since we just had Thanksgiving, I thought I'd include **collective agreement language on vacations and vacation pay**.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

Collective agreement language on vacations and vacation pay:

SMU

Vacations

23.01 All members of the bargaining unit shall be entitled to vacation pay in accordance with Article 24.01 (a).

Mount

Article 19: Vacations and Holidays

19.1 All members of the bargaining unit shall be entitled to an additional 6% of salary as vacation pay. Vacation pay shall be calculated, identified separately, and included as part of the member's regular salary payment.

19.2 No member shall be required to work on the following holidays or any other holiday proclaimed by the federal, provincial or municipal governments:

New Year's Day

Natal Day

Heritage Day

Labour day

Good Friday

Thanksgiving Day

Easter Monday

Remembrance Day

Victoria Day

Christmas Day

Canada Day

Boxing Day

19.3 Members shall be entitled to other religious holidays and observances by agreement with their Dean and Chair. The faculty member shall ensure that all course material will be covered by the end of the term.

19.4 Upon termination of the position, upon request by the member, the Employer shall issue to the member a Record of Employment form within five (5) days of the end date of the position.

Dal

ARTICLE 22 - VACATION PAY

22.1 All Employees shall be entitled to an additional 6% of salary as vacation pay to compensate the Employee for vacation pay and to be in lieu of time off with pay. Vacation pay shall be included as part of an Employee's regular salary payment.

Hello Truro members!

I really want to drive to Truro and meet as many of you as I can to recruit a new Truro VP and discuss issues that concern you. However, that is not reasonable because of the pandemic. (I would still come and meet you outside distanced, but I would not know how to find you.)

Instead, please join me in GoToMeeting social at 4 pm on Oct. 30. As we head into bargaining, make sure YOUR voice from Truro is heard. Share your concerns and ideas, even if we cannot share drinks.

Karen

Hello Mount members!

Our initial numbers show that there are indeed 30% fewer PT contracts at the Mount this fall compared to last fall as the administration had planned. Those who are still teaching continue to get paid too little with few benefits and no pension. Does this upset you? Are you concerned? Do you want to do something about it? Please join me in discussing these issues as we head into

bargaining and consider becoming our new VP for the Mount or a member of our bargaining team. We need YOUR support to make real changes!

On October 30 at noon, join me outside Keshen Goodman library (widely spaced chairs, lots of space) or online in a GoToMeeting (I'll have my computer with me to connect from the library). I'd love to see you in person or online.

Karen

Oct. 8, 2020

October is recognized as **Mi'kmaq History Month** to recognize and celebrate Mi'kmaq culture, and to educate ourselves on Mi'kmaq history. Please learn more by checking out the links on our statement. As a plant ecologist and berry picker, I love the poster for this year!

I hope you had a chance to look at our **newsletter**, put together by Larissa and her team. At the end you will have noticed that we have scheduled our fall **General Meeting** and that we will be holding **elections for some executive and non-executive positions**. We **encourage nominations from marginalized groups**, including but not limited to Aboriginal peoples; women; racialized members; members with disabilities; and lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, trans, queer, and two-spirited members. I hope anyone who is interested will contact me by email or by joining my **virtual office hours**.

Here are more details on these and other events:

- Our fall **General Meeting** will be at 2 pm on Friday November 13. Please RSVP our Membership Officer, Fallen Matthews (kittiefallen@gmail.com) by Nov. 11 for the online meeting information.
- At the meeting, we will be holding **elections** for the Vice-Presidents for Dalhousie Truro campus, Dalhousie Teaching Assistants Studley Campus and Mount St. Vincent.; a Trustee; and replacements for members of the Mount St. Vincent and Saint Mary's bargaining committees. Although you can be nominated at the meeting, if you are interested I strongly encourage you to contact me beforehand.
- Did you know that you can establish a committee at a General Meeting? Currently we just have an Education and Newsletter Committee and Joint Committees with non-executive members, but I would welcome suggestions of other **committees**. Instead of including collective agreement language, below I have an **excerpt from our by-laws**. We may also be looking for members to serve on university committees.
- If you are interested in finding out more about what it's like to serve on the executive, discuss ideas for committees or chat about anything else related to CUPE 3912, I will have my next **virtual office hours tomorrow Friday 12:30 – 1:00**. Also feel free to invite me to other online get-togethers or email me to arrange your own.
 - Fri, Oct 9, 2020 12:30 PM - 1:00 PM (ADT)
 - <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/478363237>
 - Canada: +1 (647) 497-9391
 - - One-touch: tel:+16474979391,,478363237#
 - Access Code: 478-363-237
 - New to GoToMeeting? Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/install/478363237>
- **The NS Needs Students Rally** was postponed to 1-3 pm on Oct. 14. It will be mostly online (<https://www.dsu.ca/ns-ns>). I will be speaking at the rally. The focus of the rally is

calling on the NS government to freeze tuition and to increase funding for post-secondary education.

- Check out the **interview with the president of CAUT (Canadian Association of University Teachers) on CBC** in which she mentions contract academic staff: <https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-57-the-sunday-magazine/clip/15801448-the-pandemic-reveals-cracks-canadas-post-secondary-education>
- CAUT has organized a full week of online activities for **Fair Employment Week**, taking place from October 19 to 23. See below for details and information on how to register. Note that we need to add an hour to the times.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

CAUT Fair Employment Week

Fair Employment Week, taking place from October 19 to 23, is CAUT's annual campaign to raise awareness about precarious employment on campuses and support local organizing to improve the working conditions of contract academic staff. In light of COVID-19, this year CAUT has organized a full week of online events. Below is the schedule, as well as the links to register.

Monday, October 19 / 1:00pm - 2:30pm (EDT) // *Organizing to Win for Contract Academic Staff: A CAUT Members' Panel*

Hear case studies from across the country on how academic staff associations have organized around and won victories for contract academic staff.

This event will take place in English with simultaneous interpretation into French.

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEpdO6tqz8tHN3rSuOyraZeQBr1nMrKGO3g>

Tuesday, October 20 / 1:00pm - 2:00pm (EDT) // *Intellectual Property in a Time of Remote Learning for Contract Academic Staff: A Webinar with Dr. Sam Trosow*

Join Dr. Sam Trosow, a professor at the University of Western Ontario, who will discuss the issues of ownership and control of course content for contract academic staff in a time of remote learning.

This event will take place in English with simultaneous interpretation into French.

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUpcu6sqz0jHtPSaMu2eLCtGRKejzphd3KN>

Wednesday, October 21 / 1:00pm - 2pm (EDT) // *A Keynote Address by Dr. Liz Morrish*

Liz Morrish, an independent scholar and activist for resistance to managerial appropriation of the university and co-author of the book *Academic Irregularities*, will present a talk titled, "A plague on universities: How the pandemic has created breach points for the future of labour, pedagogy and values in higher education."

This event will take place in English with simultaneous interpretation into French.

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_cXISYq2ZSC-cXZj5bJY1VA

Thursday, October 22 // *A Social Media Day of Action*

Stay tuned for shareables and ways to engage online as part of CAUT's Social Media Day of Action.

Friday, October 23 / 1:00pm - 2pm (EDT) // *A Zoom Social for Contract Academic Staff*

Join contract academic staff from coast to coast in an informal Zoom social. Folks will be put into breakout rooms to get to know one another, talk about the unique issues contract academic staff are experiencing, discuss strategies to improve working conditions, and join together in celebration of the work and contributions contract academic staff make to our universities and colleges.

https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMrC-murDsrH9JktPo-uT70bJ5v_ATrdK5-

Excerpt from our by-laws:

SECTION 17 – COMMITTEES

(a) Special Committees

A special committee may be established for a specified purpose and a specified period of time by the membership at a meeting. The members shall be elected at a membership meeting, or may, by specific authorization of the membership, be appointed by the President or the Executive Board. Two members of the Board may sit on any special committee as ex-officio members.

1. Negotiating Committee

This shall be a special ad hoc committee established for each bargaining unit at least three (3) months prior to the expiry of the respective collective agreement and automatically disbanded when a new collective agreement has been signed. The function of the committee is to prepare collective bargaining proposals and to negotiate a collective agreement. The committee shall consist of the President, Vice-President(s) for the bargaining unit, and up to two (2) members from the bargaining unit (who preferably have current contracts under the applicable Collective Agreement) elected at a membership meeting. Members of the Negotiations Committee must represent the interests of all members of the bargaining unit. The CUPE National Representative assigned to the Local shall be a non-voting member of the committee and shall be consulted at all stages from formulating proposals, through negotiations, to contract ratification by the membership.

(b) Permanent Committees

1. A Labour Management Committee or Joint Committee for the Administration of the Agreement is provided for in the Collective Agreement for each bargaining unit. The President and the Vice-President(s) of the unit shall serve on these committees. The Executive Board may also appoint other members to serve on these committees in accordance with the respective Collective Agreement.

2. Grievance Committee

The President and Vice Presidents shall serve on this committee and process all grievances from the initial stage as follows:

- The relevant Vice President will consult with the President on any grievance.
- The relevant Vice President and the President shall determine the wording of the grievance, timelines, documentation, and attend meetings with the Employer in accordance with the applicable Collective Agreement.
- A grievance must be submitted on the form provided by CUPE National, be signed by the grievor(s) and the relevant Vice President or the President. A

copy of the grievance and all related documentation shall be forwarded to the CUPE National Representative.

- A grievance not settled prior to the arbitration stage shall be submitted to the Executive Board to be considered for referral to arbitration, and to the CUPE National Representative for an opinion on the likelihood of success at arbitration.

3. Education and Newsletter Committee

The committee shall be chaired by the Communications Officer and comprise up to six (6) members.

This committee will:

- Conduct research and prepare membership communications;
- Assist in producing a newsletter *at least once during each regular session (September to December term and January to April term)*;
- Report news of members to the appropriate general campus newsletters, papers, or electronic news services;
- Make recommendations to the Executive Board for representation of the Local at conferences, conventions, and educationals;
- Assist members in the preparation of reports to the membership on conferences, conventions and educationals, and maintain a file of these reports;
- Act in a consultative fashion with the webmaster;
- Cooperate with the Executive Board in preparing press releases and other publicity material.

Sept. 23, 2020

I hope you have all weathered the storm. It's been a while since my last update as it seemed to be calm before the storm. But now events and news items seemed to be accumulating again. Stay tuned for our newsletter soon for more but here are some for now.

- **The Dalhousie Students Union is holding a NS Needs Students Rally** 1-3 pm on Sept. 30. There will be a few people gathering in person (contact dsuvpae@dal.ca if you are interested) but it will be mostly online (<https://www.dsu.ca/ns-ns>). I will be speaking at the rally. The focus of the rally is calling on the NS government to freeze tuition and to increase funding for post-secondary education.
 - Students can complete this survey investigating how rising tuition is affecting students. Testimonials will be used in our lobbying efforts for a tuition freeze and increased funding for post-secondary institutions.
<https://airtable.com/shrGeslAyXc9UXm7l>
 - The rally will be live streamed on our Instagram (@dalstudentunion).
- **CAUT highlights role for federal government in strengthening post-secondary education in advance of the Speech from the Throne.** The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) [has written](#) to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to urge development of a national pandemic recovery plan that includes strategic investment in Canada's post-secondary education sector. In its recent [pre-budget submission](#), CAUT pointed to the critical need to improve the affordability and sustainability of PSE as part of any recovery plan and made several recommendations, including:

- Develop a national strategy with the provinces and territories that provides adequate, stable federal funding to support quality post-secondary education.
- Accelerate research through enhanced investments in the Tri-Councils granting programs and increase graduate student scholarships.
- Secure opportunities for Canada's youth & unemployed Canadians by moving to a free tuition model for low and middle-class Canadians at public universities and colleges.
- The **interactive panel on the film 'In Search of Professor Precarious'** with leading activists and researchers from Canada and the US is now available.
- I am going to hold another **virtual office Thursday Oct. 1 at 4 pm** where you can drop in and meet me. Also feel free to invite me to other online get-togethers or email me to arrange your own.
 - Thu, Oct 1, 2020 4:00 PM - 4:30 PM (ADT)
 - <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/819617629>
 - Canada: +1 (647) 497-9391
 - - One-touch: <tel:+16474979391,,819617629#>
 - Access Code: 819-617-629
 - New to GoToMeeting? Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/install/819617629>
- This week I am including excerpts from the collective agreements on evaluation of instructors – see below.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

Collective agreement language on evaluation:

SMU

Article 15 Evaluations

15.01 Evaluation of part-time faculty members shall be carried out every three years at the time of consideration for re-appointment (16.01). At the request of the Chair or Dean, evaluations may be carried out at times other than the three-year review.

The purpose of evaluations is to determine whether the part-time faculty member is teaching effectively, as well as to assess the areas of specialization and course levels that a part-time faculty member is qualified to teach. The basis of evaluation will be a teaching dossier prepared by the part-time faculty member and submitted to the Department Chair at least ten (10) weeks before their re-appointment date. For part-time faculty members whose initial appointment was between May 1 and August 31 of the year of appointment, the re-appointment date shall be September 1; for those whose initial appointment date was between September 1 and December 31, the re-appointment date shall be January 1; and for those whose initial appointment date was between January 1 and April 30, the re-appointment date shall be May 1.

The university shall notify the part-time faculty member in writing of the submission date for the teaching dossier in their letter of appointment/re-appointment.

The teaching dossier shall include the following:

- (a) An up-to-date curriculum vitae, including degrees, professional designations or other credentials earned since the part-time faculty member's initial appointment/last three-year review.
- (b) Evidence of the part-time faculty member's teaching effectiveness, including:
 - i) A list of courses taught by the part-time faculty member over at least the past three years, information about enrolments, type of course (e.g. lecture, seminar, lab).
 - ii) Sample course materials (e.g. course syllabi, sample assignments, tests).
 - iii) An explanation of the teaching principles/philosophy and instructional methods used by the part-time faculty member to help students in their courses to succeed.
 - iv) Results from student evaluations of the part-time faculty member's teaching using the Senate-approved Instructor/Course evaluation system. It should be understood by those persons assessing the dossier, and by employees in preparing their dossiers, that the number of responses from student evaluations should be taken into consideration.
 - v) A brief statement of any steps taken by the part-time faculty member to improve their teaching, outlining professional/instructional development activities and the steps taken to maintain familiarity with up-to-date scholarship in the part-time faculty member's discipline since the initial appointment/last three-year review.
 - vi) Any additional information which is relevant to the assessment of the part-time faculty member's teaching responsibilities.

Recommendations arising from the assessment of teaching effectiveness shall follow the procedure laid out in 16.01 (c).

15.02 The results of part-time faculty member evaluation will be shared in writing with the part-time faculty member, treated in a confidential manner, and placed in the part-time faculty member's official file. Following the conclusion of evaluations the teaching dossier shall be returned to the part-time faculty member.

15.03 No anonymous evaluative material concerning a part-time faculty member shall be kept in his/her official file or submitted in any formal deliberation, action, hearing or proceeding, except as provided in Clause 15.04.

15.04 Student evaluations of teaching, using the Senate-approved Instructor/Course Evaluation form, shall be carried out in each course taught by a part-time faculty member. Multiple-choice responses and other coded material gathered in this way as a result of any collective teacher evaluation authorized by the Senate or any Faculty of Saint Mary's University shall not be considered anonymous material under the terms of Clause 15.03. Comments and remarks written by respondents during such evaluations are anonymous material under the terms of Clause 15.03, unless the Senate or a Faculty of Saint Mary's University specifically specifies otherwise. Signed comments are confidential, but may be revealed to the part-time faculty member they concern without identifying their authors.

MOUNT

Article 14: Evaluation

14.1 Assessment of performance in a position shall include the following criteria:

- 14.1.1 Teaching performance;
- 14.1.2 Fulfilment of workload responsibilities.

14.2 Teaching performance may be assessed through consideration of the following:

- 14.2.1 In-class review and/or online review by department faculty with notice of five days by department Chair;

14.2.2 Departmental review of course and program content;

14.2.3 Results of Senate-approved student evaluations;

14.2.3.1 If a person is applying for a position while currently teaching for the University, then the most recent student evaluations available in the academic file shall be used in the assessment;

14.2.4 Substantiated student reports on teaching.

14.2.5 Faculty Member's optional self-assessment of teaching performance as per Article

14.4.

14.3 Workload responsibilities are defined in Article 13. Fulfilment of workload responsibilities may be assessed through consideration of the following:

14.3.1 Timeliness in attendance to duties;

14.3.2 Adherence to departmental and University policies.

14.3.3 Faculty Member's optional self-assessment of fulfilment of workload responsibilities as per Article 14.4.

14.4 A member may submit a completed self-assessment form to the department Chair for consideration as part of the Chair's assessment. The self-assessment form shall be submitted to the Chair and copied to the Dean, within twenty (20) days of the end of the term in which the course was taught in order to be considered as part of the Chair's assessment. The self-assessment form shall be included in the member's academic file.

14.4.1 The Joint Committee shall be responsible for the development of a mutually agreed self-assessment form.

14.5 In accordance with Article 12.9.1 and Articles 14.1 to 14.3, the department Chair, or designate, shall assess performance and submit a brief written performance evaluation to the Dean for inclusion in the academic file, with a copy to the member, specifying whether the member's performance has been satisfactory or unsatisfactory. A member may submit, within twenty (20) working days of receiving the performance evaluation, a written response to the evaluation for inclusion in the academic file, with a copy to the department Chair.

14.5.1 Course evaluations that are not completed within sixty (60) days of the end of the term shall not be used to remove a member from the precedence list as per Article 12.9.2.3.

14.5.2 After one unsatisfactory performance evaluation, the member's Chair and/or Dean shall meet with the Employee to discuss the performance evaluation and opportunity for improvement.

14.5.3 Where a member and the Chair and/or Dean have met following a first unsatisfactory evaluation in accordance with Article 14.5.2, the parties may establish a Performance Improvement Plan upon mutual agreement of the member, the Chair, and the Dean. The Performance Improvement Plan shall set out formal measures for performance improvement in areas outlined in Articles 14.1 – 14.3 in which the member's performance has been deemed unsatisfactory and a timeline for completion, which shall normally not be more than one full term.

14.6 The Employer shall, except where there are circumstances beyond their control, make available to members complete student evaluations, including students' comments, within thirty (30) working days of the end of the term in which the course was taught.

DAL

ARTICLE 12 - EMPLOYEE ASSESSMENTS FOR PART-TIME ACADEMICS

12.1 The purpose of academic performance assessment by the Employer is twofold:

(i) To assess the Part-Time Academic's performance and to thereby assist the Part-Time Academic in developing and improving their skills; and

(ii) To ensure a standard of acceptable employee performance.

12.2 The work performance of a Part-Time Academic will be assessed once per academic year. The performance assessment will be conducted by the appropriate Department Head, Chair, or Director. In faculties where there is no Department Head, Chair, or Director, the assessment will be conducted by the Dean or their designate.

12.3 Part-Time Academics shall be given at least twenty (20) calendar days' notice that a performance assessment is to be conducted. Such assessment shall take place at a mutually agreeable time. A performance assessment that is not completed within ninety (90) days following the availability of data from a Senate-approved student rating of instruction tool shall not be used to remove a Part-Time Academic from the precedence list.

12.4 If an assessment report is prepared by the Employer, it shall be placed in the Part-Time Academic's file. The Part-Time Academic shall be given an opportunity to acknowledge that they have reviewed such assessment by signing the copy to be filed. The Part-Time Academic may attach comments related to the performance assessment report.

12.5 In the event that a student completes a Senate or Faculty Council approved evaluation on a Part-Time Academic, the evaluation results may be included in the Part-Time Academic's file in a form that does not reveal the student's identity to the Part-Time Academic. Student evaluation results placed in the Part-Time Academic file will be included in the assessment of performance.

12.6 In the event course time is required to complete a student evaluation form, the Employer shall provide the Part-Time Academic with five (5) calendar days' notice in advance of the class.

Sept. 7, 2020

Happy Labour Day, CUPE 3912 members!

As we celebrate the accomplishment of workers this year, we stand in solidarity with those who have lost work due to COVID-19 related cuts.

The pandemic has amplified the vulnerability of a number of sectors. Our work as contingent academics is no exception. We see how essential fair working conditions are to our physical and mental health. We deserve health benefits, paid sick leave, fair compensation, and job security. We deserve better.

Together, we CAN make it FAIR in Halifax and Truro.

In solidarity, Larissa

In addition to this Labour Day message from our communications officer, here are some other items for the update this week:

- Today in Halifax there was a **rally for paid sick days**, an important cause for many workers. You can still send the Premier, the Minister of Labour and your MLA a letter by clicking this link. [Send a letter now.](#)
- By now most of you have heard of the **Scholars Strike**. Dalhousie and the Mount have already sent emails about it to their communities and I expect SMU will do the same. The following is from CAUT: On September 9 and 10, academics in Canada are planning to pause their regular teaching and administrative duties to participate in activities and actions to protest racism and police violence. Inspired by the actions of professional

athletes and the #ScholarStrike campaign in the United States, academic staff will be standing in solidarity with protest movements fighting for social and racial justice in Canada and around the world. A series of virtual teach-ins are being planned, as well as a twitter storm using the hashtags #scholarstrike #scholarstrikeCanada. More details about activities being organized in Canada is available at <https://scholarstrikecanada.ca/> .

- Instead of visiting offices, I am going to try a **virtual office this Friday 1-2 pm** where you can drop in and meet me. Also feel free to invite me to other online get-togethers or email me to arrange your own.
 - CUPE 3912 Virtual Office
 - Fri, Sep 11, 2020 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ADT)
 - Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.
 - <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/877725613>
 - You can also dial in using your phone.
 - (For supported devices, tap a one-touch number below to join instantly.)
 - Canada: +1 (647) 497-9373 - One-touch: <tel:+16474979373,,877725613#>
 - Access Code: 877-725-613
 - New to GoToMeeting? Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/install/877725613>
- In case you are wondering what our collective agreements say about strikes, I have included excerpts about this below.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

Collective agreement language on strikes:

Dalhousie

ARTICLE 24 - NO STRIKE/LOCKOUT

24.1 It is agreed that there shall be no strikes as defined in the Trade Union Act during the duration of this Agreement.

24.2 It is agreed that there shall be no lockouts by the Employer for the duration of this Agreement.

24.3 The University agrees it will not direct Employees covered by the Collective Agreement to perform work during lawful strikes or lockouts that would normally be carried out by other employees on strike or locked out.

MSVU

Article 5: Strikes and Lockouts

5.1 During the term of this Agreement, the Union agrees that there shall be no strikes and the Employer agrees that there shall be no lockouts.

5.2 The University agrees that it will not direct employees covered by the collective agreement to perform work resulting from lawful strikes or lock-outs that would normally have been carried out by those employees on strike or lockout.

SMU

ARTICLE 1 NO STRIKES/LOCKOUTS

11.01 It is agreed that there shall be no strike, work stoppage, or lock-out, as defined by the Nova Scotia Trade Union Act, unless all the requirements, conditions and limitations specified in the said Act are adhered to.

11.02 In the event that any employees of Saint Mary's University, other than those covered by this Agreement, engage in a lawful strike or are locked-out, Employees covered by this Agreement shall not be directed to perform work normally done by those Employees on strike or locked out.

Aug. 31, 2020

As we start the week before classes, there have been or will be orientations at the universities. We also have our own introduction to CUPE 3912 as a presentation on our website. Usually at this time of year I would be visiting your offices to meet as many of you as I can to introduce myself and discuss any union-related issues. The disadvantage of the alternative online meetings is that I need to be invited. If you and your colleagues are planning any get-togethers, orientations or social events with PT instructors, **PLEASE INVITE ME!** I really want to get to know you and this is the only possible way to do this these days. Also feel free to arrange an online meeting with me individually.

Here are some other messages and events:

- This morning there was a story on the CBC radio program The Current about **university tuition during the pandemic**. I submitted a comment on their website (see below).
- We agreed on a **joint statement for Dalhousie**.
- For Dalhousie (and elsewhere), **please let us know** if you applied to teach a course but someone else with lower precedence was awarded the position because you did not have as much experience teaching online. This should not be happening. As long as you meet the qualifications for a position, you should be awarded it if you have the highest precedence.
- The Halifax-Dartmouth & District Labour Council and Mayworks Halifax Festival of Working People and the Arts have put together a day of amazing cultural programming for a virtual **online celebration of Labour Day** this year.
- CAUT compiled results of their **survey on post-secondary staff concerns during the pandemic**. Their powerpoint presentation provides a good summary. I noted some of their relevant conclusions:
 - Only 1 in 5 part-time workers feel job secure and more than 1 in 3 fear lay-offs in the next 12 months.
 - Those in Nova Scotia (42%) and Alberta (37%) are most concerned about their job security, compared to the average of 24%. This is potentially a reflection of the weak job security provisions for contract workers in Nova Scotia.
- CAUT is asking for **support for a petition** that calls on university presidents across the country to endorse the United Nations (UN) climate emergency letter. This letter calls on institutions:
 - to declare a climate emergency,
 - to mobilize more resources for action-oriented climate change research,
 - to go carbon neutral by 2030 or 2050 at the very latest and

- to increase the delivery of environmental and sustainability education.
- As classes are starting soon, many of you received your contracts a while ago while others are only receiving them now. It still takes a while for our union to get this information from the university. This week I am including **language from our collective agreements about the process of getting information about our members.**

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

My comment to The Current on their show about university tuition:

Hi. Thank-you for covering the story about university tuition on The Current this morning. I have a comment about the role of part-time instructors.

University administrators are citing extra costs to put courses online to justify increasing tuition this year. Universities have been offering workshops, webinars and other support for instructors to teach their courses online for the past few months. However, part-time instructors, who are precariously employed and often teach a third or more of courses at a university, have little or no incentive to take advantage of these workshops. These instructors are expected to put in a lot more hours to teach online, take extra training and start course preparation and interact with students a lot earlier, and yet are paid very little, receive no extra compensation and often do not even receive their contract until just before classes start. Students absolutely must not be expected to pay more for online education and the most precarious employees must not be expected to work more for the little they earn. I reiterate David Robinson's recommendation that both federal and provincial governments must contribute more to post-secondary education both now and in the long-term.

Karen Harper, president of CUPE 3912, union of part-time instructors at Dalhousie, Saint Mary's and Mount St. Vincent Universities in Halifax

Collective agreement language on receiving information about contracts:

Dalhousie

3.3 The Employer shall provide the Union with the names via e-mail of all Employees in the bargaining unit who are recorded on the Payroll/Human Resource Information System as of the 4th week of the beginning of the Fall and Winter term, and as of the 3rd week of the 3rd and 4th terms. The listings shall include name, department, job classification or position title, wage or stipend, mailing address, telephone number, and Dalhousie e-mail address if available. The confidentiality of individual data shall be respected by the Union, which shall use the information only to contact members of the bargaining unit.

3.4 The Employer agrees to advise new Employees in writing that they are included in the bargaining unit represented by CUPE Local 3912 and that their employment is on the terms and conditions set out in the current Collective Agreement.

Mount

3.4 On or before October 1, February 1, June 1, and July 15 of each year, the Employer shall provide by e-mail to the CUPE Local 3912 Office a listing of all members of the bargaining unit

by name, home address, postal code, phone number, email address if available, department, job classification, and salary. This shall also be copied electronically to the Secretary-Treasurer of the Union. The information provided shall be accurate to the best of the Employer's knowledge on the date provided.

3.4.1 The confidentiality of individual data shall be respected by the Union, and the information shall be for the sole purpose of representing the employees in accordance with the Union's role as exclusive bargaining agent.

SMU

5.06 At the beginning of each semester, the Employer agrees to provide the CUPE Local 3912 Office with a list via email of the names of all members of the bargaining unit, including department and wages for each as well as the mailing addresses, current phone numbers and e-mail address where available. The confidentiality of individual data shall be respected by the Union, which shall use the information only to contact members of the bargaining unit.

Aug. 17, 2020

Here are some recent updates and upcoming events:

- **At the Mount** we have been told that there will be **no pre-emptive course cancellations** this winter semester.
- **At SMU** I have been informed that there will be **no extra compensation** for fall courses as there was for summer courses. I was also told that there is a digital TA support program and help with Brightspace; look at emails from SMU or the Studio website or contact SAS for extra support. Note that I realize that this is not the same as receiving extra compensation for the extra workload and I think the admin does too, but they claim their revenue will decrease because of the pandemic.
- I heard more about what is happening in terms of concessions and other issues at other universities in the region at the **Atlantic Canada Council of Faculty Associations meeting** this morning. I found out that increased workload was the number one concern for academic staff according to a national survey.
- **CAUT** (Canadian Association of University Teachers) has put out a **pre-budget submission** to develop a national strategy with the provinces and territories to provide stable and adequate funding to post-secondary education, expand research funding and increase access to higher education through a free tuition model for low- and middle-class Canadians. They ask people to send a letter through their website (it's an easy form to fill out).
- **CAUT** is holding another **Town Hall: Labour Under Attack - Implications for Academic Workplaces - August 26 – 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm (EDT)**. Please RSVP.
- If you know of any newly-hired **Dalhousie** part-time faculty members, please let them know about the **New Academic Staff Orientation**: <https://www.dal.ca/dept/clt/events-news/annual-events/NASO.html> The first 3 live sessions will be recorded and added to the Brightspace site, which will remain open indefinitely.
- The free, online **world premiere of 'In Search of Professor Precarious'**, a Canadian documentary feature examining the issues, stories and struggles of precarious contract faculty in higher education, will be available from Friday, Sept. 4 @ 5:30 pm MDT until Sunday, Sept. 6 @ 5:30 pm MDT: <http://professorprecarious.com/>, followed by a free,

live Zoom interactive panel/webinar addressing current issues for precarious contract faculty:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88378716131?pwd=RUFZCjFUZ0pSb0JmQWVvRHlGeEhmZj09> Passcode: 375259

- I haven't yet included the **collective agreement language for Health and Safety** so I do so below.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

Collective agreement language on health and safety:

SMU

Health and Safety

20.01 The parties agree that the health and safety of Employees is an important mutual concern. The parties agree that they shall cooperate in promoting the health and safety of Employees at the University and in effecting compliance with the *Nova Scotia Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations*.

Mount

Article 9: Health, Safety and Security

9.1 In accordance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* of Nova Scotia, the union is guaranteed representation on the University Occupational Health and Safety Committee. The parties agree that the Union is entitled to at least one member on the Committee. The parties further agree that the Committee shall elect the Co-Chairs, with support services provided through the Employer.

Dal

ARTICLE 19 - HEALTH & SAFETY

19.1 The Employer, the Union, and the Employees shall comply with the Nova Scotia Occupational Health & Safety Act/Regulations, and any amendments made to this Act throughout the duration of this Agreement.

19.2 The Employer has two Environmental Health & Safety Committees established in accordance with the Occupational Health & Safety Act, one for the Halifax campuses and one for the Agricultural campus. The composition of these Committees shall be one (1) member from each employee group or bargaining unit and an equal number of Employer representatives.

19.3 The Union may select one (1) Employee representative to serve on the Halifax committee and one (1) Employee representative to serve on the Agricultural campus committee. Representatives shall request alternates to participate in their absence. When required, the Employer will facilitate the participation of all representatives through video or audio conferencing.

Aug. 3, 2020

Happy Natal Day! I hope you are enjoying your long weekend. Just a few things in this update:

- **If you are having any challenges around remote delivery of courses** that are not being resolved by your department or faculty, please contact your CUPE 3912 VP or myself. The SMU admin specifically asked me about this and I had to reply that I was not aware of any issues. For any university, we can only raise issues if we are aware of them, so feel free to let us know.
- I came across this news story about **home office expenses**: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/covid-pandemic-tax-deduction-1.5658739> Because there is uncertainty around the T2200 form and the guidelines may change, we are trying to get the employers to agree to provide the T2200 forms if or when a member is eligible. This is already included in the recent joint statement at the Mount.
- A **documentary film about contingent faculty** is available as part of a film festival today. You can check it out at <https://www.workersunitefilmfestival.org/> It starts at about 6:00. There will be further screenings in the fall.
- We are preparing for bargaining so I'm going to get back to including excerpts from our collective agreements. This time I've included **excerpts about human rights and diversity issues**.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

Collective agreement language on diversity, human rights and related issues:

MOUNT

Article 10: No Discrimination

10.1 The Employer and the Union agree that there shall be no discrimination against any employee in accordance with the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act. The parties acknowledge that this commitment to no discrimination may give rise to the duty to accommodate an individual member. The parties agree that in such circumstances a reasonable accommodation up to the point of undue hardship shall be sought. The parties acknowledge that the process of accommodation is a cooperative one which shall be undertaken in compliance with Nova Scotia's Human Rights Act. Any accommodation under this article shall be a written agreement between the University and the member, which shall be documented in the member's personnel file in accordance with Article 15 of this Agreement.

10.2 It is understood and agreed that, notwithstanding Article 10.1 above, the Employer's policy with respect to the preferred hiring of women shall continue and shall be encouraged and developed by the parties to this Agreement.

10.3 It is understood and agreed that, notwithstanding Article 10.1 above, the Employer, having signed a Certificate of Commitment to Implement Employment Equity under the terms of the Federal Contractors Program is committed to the hiring of women, visible minorities, aboriginal peoples and persons with disabilities.

10.4 The parties agree to promote workplace diversity and shall, where appropriate, work together to facilitate the implementation of employment systems, policies, and practices that are

inclusive and non-discriminatory in nature and effect and that are consistent with the terms and conditions of this agreement.

SMU

ARTICLE 4 NO DISCRIMINATION

4.01 The Employer and the Union agree that there shall be no discrimination in accordance with the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act against any employee because of age; race; colour; religion; creed; sex; sexual orientation; gender identity; gender expression; physical or mental disability (except in those cases where the disability precludes the performance of employment duties); an irrational fear of contracting an illness or disease; ethnic, national or aboriginal origin; family status; marital status; source of income; political belief, affiliation or activity.

DAL

ARTICLE 4 - NO DISCRIMINATION

4.1 The Employer and the Union agree that neither will discriminate against any Employee by reason of prohibited grounds of discrimination as outlined in Section 5(1) of the Human Rights Act, R.S.N.S. 1989, as amended, except as may be permitted by the Human Rights Act, under the exceptions outlined in Section 6 of the Act or by reason of their membership or non-membership in the Union.

4.2 The University and the Union are committed to address employment equity issues and recognize the need to discuss areas of mutual concern.

July 20, 2020

Happy Pride! See our website for more information about online events!

- The joint committee at the Mount, composed of myself, our VP for the Mount (Amanda Griffin) and Nicholous Deal, and members of the Mount administration, developed a **joint statement for CUPE 3912 members at the Mount** that addresses the use of student evaluations and other issues during the pandemic. This joint statement is not comprehensive and we hope to have others.
- You may have heard about the **firing of NSCAD president Aoife Mac Namara**. Faculty and students at NSCAD, and many others in the academic community are very unhappy about this decision, particularly because she was considered a leader for some important equity issues. If you are interested in finding out more or signing a petition to have Aoife Mac Namara reinstated, see <https://www.change.org/p/hon-labi-kousoulis-minister-of-labour-advanced-education-fire-the-nscad-board-of-governors-reinstate-president-dr-aoife-mac-namara>
- The Nova Scotia Federation of Labour is lobbying for changes to EI as the CERB is being phased out. For more information or to send a letter, see https://nslabour.nationbuilder.com/r?u=Tzf5D4XqkkB0FbzroI6mMXFc78opCI4I36cORcuMlr3c6PW-flsk3M7DOGprfzCopc2VAPplpU7IFf8ykJopQ&e=f0f1daab9b76bc4820894b54978a5e5d&utm_source=nslabour&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=fix_ei_now&n=2

Enjoy the summer! I will be on my family vacation next week so probably no update for two weeks.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,
Karen Harper
President, CUPE 3912

July 13, 2020

It's been a while since my last update and there isn't much to report. We continue to question university administrations about course offerings this fall and other issues such as extra compensation, but it is challenging as job advertisements seem to be just coming out now for some departments.

- The **Students, Staff and Faculty Alliance is promoting our letter** for individual members to send to politicians and university presidents asking for more funding for universities. The process is easy and you can decide who you want to send it to. Please check out the website if you have not already.
- Some members of the bargaining teams may be taking a CAUT workshop on **Analysing University and College Financial Statements** next week. My understanding is that is open to all our members so please contact me if you are interested.
- CUPE 3902 at U of T is hiring a Staff Organizer.

Enjoy the Summer!

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,
Karen Harper
President, CUPE 3912

June 26, 2020

Next week is Canada Day and some people, including Dalhousie University, are planning to take some days off. Most of CUPE 3912 executive are also taking days off July 1-5, although we will be available for urgent matters.

- It seems that we have a **partial victory at the Mount**. We have been told that the deans and chairs have been asked to re-evaluate course offerings for the fall. It is unclear how many cuts to PT positions will be reversed but we are told there is not longer a directive to cut 30% of positions. At **SMU**, the philosophy is to maintain the normal procedure in hiring PT faculty with no pre-emptive cuts, although courses may have to be cut later if there is low enrolment. It continues to be difficult to find out what is happening **at Dal**, but it is department-specific. At all universities we will not know for certain how many fewer PT positions there will be this fall until we get the final numbers in October.
- I was **interviewed again by CBC**. Although it was related to a story about the DFA, I was able to get across some messages relevant to PT instructors.
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/dalhousie-university-five-percent-wage-cut-1.5627776>
- **At SMU**, the admin has confirmed that 'spring 2020 (May-June) and summer 2020 (July-August) **course evaluations will not be used** in processes described in collective agreements unless so desired by the faculty member'.
- We have decided **not to conduct our own survey** on the impact of the response of the universities on our members. It seems there are quite a few surveys on this already. If

you have any comments or suggestions you would like to share, please contact your VP or myself.

- CAUT has developed some [recommendations](#) for how the federal government can best respond to challenges facing post-secondary institutions, while also putting universities and colleges on a path to long-term sustainability. You can use [CAUT's on-line template](#) to send a letter to their Member of Parliament (MP) calling for immediate steps to further close the gaps in emergency support and long-term actions to improve the affordability and sustainability of post-secondary education.

Enjoy the Summer!

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

June 21, 2020

Today we celebrate National Indigenous Day, a day to honour the diverse cultures of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples. MSVU, SMU, and Dalhousie, the institutions where our members work, are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people. We are all treaty people, and all must work towards decolonization, reconciliation and honouring on-going treaty relationships.

As a plant ecologist, I noticed a CBC news story on how plant seeds are more than food for Indigenous People, who preserve seeds because they have cultural ties to their community. Preserving seeds helps all of us by maintaining genetic diversity for plants such as food crops. We can all learn a lot from two-eyed seeing approaches and indigenization in Canadian Universities.

- **Thank-you for voting!** The results are in. The proposals are ratified at all three universities with a high turnout and strong bargaining mandate.
- Here is another survey on the impact of covid on Canadian faculty from researchers at the University of Lethbridge. All faculty (full professors to sessionals) are invited to complete a 10-15-minute survey at:
https://uleth.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3JechcuX7sKpJ5z

Happy Solstice!

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

June 16, 2020

- Don't forget the **ratification vote on bargaining proposals** for PT instructors, TAs, markers and demonstrators on Thursday and Friday. Contact outreach.cupe3912@gmail.com if you don't receive an email to vote.
- We are continuing to **protest the cuts to part-time positions** at the Mount and to monitor the situation at the other universities. Please share any stories about cuts to

positions and their impact on you or students with your VP, if you are willing (we can keep stories anonymous).

- **If you feel that you are being treated unfairly or are not being informed correctly about working conditions** (e.g., told that you are not allowed to apply to courses), **please contact your VP immediately.**
- Check out <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/nova-scotia-universities-covid-19-declining-enrolment-budget-cuts-1.5609971> This was also on the **local news on the radio** on Saturday.
- Our MSVU VP, Amanda Griffin, wrote an excellent **response to the Mount's strategic plan** – see below.
- From the Canadian Association of University Teachers: **CAUT calls on the federal government to extend emergency wage subsidy support to universities and colleges.** In recommendations presented to the federal Finance Committee, CAUT is calling on the federal government to allow universities and colleges to access the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS). “Universities and colleges, like other organizations, need financial support to retain and pay employees during the COVID-19 pandemic,” says CAUT Executive Director David Robinson. “Academics and staff are taking urgent steps to continue to conduct research and provide education. This vital work will be significantly hampered if institutions cannot retain employees and maintain operations throughout this crisis.”
- The **Dalhousie Student Union has a campaign** that we can fill out as ‘community members’ – check it out <http://dsu.ca/rejectthe3>

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Amanda's response to the Mount's strategic plan:

Dear Dr. Bluehardt,

Thank you for the draft strategic plan. While many of these intentions sound wonderful on paper, we at CUPE 3912 urge you to take them into consideration when considering steps to be taken by the University. For example, the upcoming 30% cuts to part-time instructor contracts violates the commitments to Community Engagement; Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility; A Healthy University Campus for All; Transformative Teaching and Learning; and Operational Excellence and Sustainability. Considered from that perspective, only two of the seven strategic themes are potentially unharmed by that decision. While we are proud to be a part of a University that attempts to honour such admirable themes, we urge you to consider your commitments when making real, every day decisions that affect some of the most vulnerable in your community and the students we aim to serve.

Sincerely,

Amanda Griffin, VP, CUPE 3912, MSVU

Karen Harper, President, CUPE 3912

June 9, 2020

Just a couple of items today but lots for each. Also check out the **CAUT Bulletin**. The May–June issue explores the effects of the pandemic on academic work and research, including an analysis of the current situation and reflections on the future after COVID-19. You can read the latest issue on the [CAUT website](#) or download in [PDF format](#).

Budget cuts at the Mount

- We are getting **support** and **media attention** for this issue.
- Check out <https://www.thechronicleherald.ca/news/local/fall-enrollment-worries-lead-to-part-time-instructor-cuts-at-msvu-458883/>
- Also <https://www.thechronicleherald.ca/news/local/fall-enrollment-worries-lead-to-part-time-instructor-cuts-at-msvu-458883/>
- Yesterday I was interviewed by CBC, who I think will also interview some Mount students and alumni so listen to **CBC Radio News** later today!
- **Thank-you** to the Mount Faculty Association, Mount students and alumni, and the NS University workers and students alliance for their ongoing support. Special thanks to Teresa Workman from ANSUT for writing the press release and organizing media interviews.

Information sessions and vote on bargaining proposals

- You will have already received the **schedule** for bargaining information sessions and the online ratification vote on proposals so here I'll just add some explanations.
- You **must RSVP** Dave to receive a GoToMeeting invite to an information session.
- Ideally it would be best to attend the **information session for your bargaining unit** at your university. However, you are welcome to join any information session. They will be very similar except the ones for teaching assistants.
- These information sessions are for discussing **bargaining proposals**. If there is time at the end I can take questions on other topics.
- You do not have to attend an information session to vote but **we will NOT be distributing the proposals**. If you are not available for any information sessions, please contact me to arrange to look at the proposals.
- Voting yes to **ratify the bargaining proposals** means that you agree in principal to the proposals but that you also acknowledge that the proposals will be developed further and that they may change during bargaining. In other words, after the ratification of the proposals, we will work from these ideas to develop exact wording for the collective agreement and during negotiations the bargaining teams will be modifying proposals as we deem necessary. But we will endeavor to negotiate for the main principles of the ratified proposals as much as possible. Also remember that you will be voting to ratify the new collective agreement after bargaining.

Stay healthy everyone.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Subject: Call to action against layoffs at the Mount

Last week our VP for the Mount and I were told by the administration at Mount St. Vincent Universities that they asked chairs and deans to cut part-time positions by 30%. After explaining how we disagreed and were very disappointed, I later participated in an online debriefing session

when the CAUT president was encouraging us to fight against such policies. So I decided that we needed to act and the best way was to do so with the support and assistance of the NS University workers and students alliance.

Together we sent a letter to the president of the Mount earlier today. The Mount Faculty Association has also sent a similar letter as they are also very concerned about this policy. Tomorrow we will send a press release and I hope that we will receive media attention. Here is quote that I supplied for the press release:

‘The cuts to part-time positions affect not only our instructors but also the quality of education for students. If these cuts go ahead, fewer courses would be offered and class sizes would increase. These cuts would cause job losses for part-time instructors, negatively affect working conditions for both full and part-time faculty, and greatly damage the quality of education for students. This is unacceptable at a time when we need to be striving to maintain high-quality working conditions for instructors and therefore learning conditions for students.’

What can YOU do? As I mentioned, this is part of a broader issue of university administrations using possible declining enrollments as a reason for layoffs and increasing tuition for students. The university workers and students alliance has put together a website for a letter that you can sign and send to you politicians and university presidents. Please sign this letter: <https://cfs-ns.ca/demands2020>

If you have any other ideas of what we can do against policies such as these that target our members at any university, please let me or your VP know.

In solidarity,

Karen

Hi CUPE 3912 members. I echo CUPE national’s message of solidarity to our racialized membership in response to recent events including police brutality and white supremacy in the US and ongoing racism throughout North America including here in Nova Scotia. I have read similar messages from my professional organizations, which were accompanied by an admission of the dominance of white faces and ongoing racial injustice.

This is a good time to acknowledge racism within our own organization and workplaces. As a group of precarious workers, diversity among our members might actually be because fewer racialized academics are able to reach full-time faculty positions. I don’t think we have the statistics yet but it is likely that racialized academics are more likely to experience precarious and low-paying working conditions.

In pre-covid times, I wondered about having more committees within CUPE 3912 including a diversity and equity committee, which could address some of the these issues recently brought to the forefront within our own organization and within the universities in which we work. If anyone is interested in establishing such a committee, please let me know.

In solidarity,

Karen

May 27, 2020

I hope you are all finding some way to enjoy the nice weather these days. I am just getting a few news items and announcements these days.

- I have been told that the **policy not to use student evaluations** has been extended through the summer at Dal and through the duration of virtual teaching because of the pandemic at the Mount. SMU is considering their policy.
- I was interviewed for a **Chronicle Herald article**
<https://www.thechronicleherald.ca/news/provincial/university-profs-students-unions-call-for-covid-19-help-446592/>
- I attended **CAUT discussions** on the results of a student survey they conducted and on research during this time with members from the tri-council (NSERC, SSHRC, CIHR). The discussion on the student survey was particularly interesting. It sounds like there is the potential for lower student enrollment, but not as much as we might think, especially if there was lower tuition.
- I also attended another discussion hosted by the Association of NS University Teachers. It was suggested that we remind our members that our collective agreement still applies and **if you have any issues, please contact us** (your VP).
- A reminder about the **CAUT survey** open until June 8. **[National survey for members on the impact of COVID-19](#)**
- Please consider signing the **letter from CUPE to the prime minister about long-term care**. See below.
- Dave has finished his training as Outreach Coordinator. **Thank-you to Amy Donovan** for her years of service as CUPE 3912 Webmaster! We wish her well as she continues her PhD and beyond.

Stay healthy everyone.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

May 19, 2020

It has been a while since my last update. One reason is that last week I participated in a virtual conference. I encourage you to try these if you can. The cost is low with no accomodation or travel expenses and lower registration fees. It is not as good as in person but you do get something out of it. Also, those of you with precedence can apply for **PD funds**. Dalhousie has recently expanded the eligibility for PD funds and the other universities may be more open to creative use of these funds. Please check your collective agreement for details and contact your VP if you need more information.

- The **Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT)** is seeking to understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the working lives of staff at universities and colleges across the country. This information will be used by CAUT and member associations to inform our policy and advocacy work. While the **survey** is entirely voluntary, we are asking for your full participation to ensure as many academic staff and general staff as possible are included in this critical study. The survey is open to those who were working at one or more Canadian post-secondary institution (universities, colleges, and polytechnics), in March of this year. The survey consists of approximately 30 questions—some multiple-choice and some open-ended—that should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. The survey will be open until **June 8, 2020**.

National survey for members on the impact of COVID-19

- Please note that **CUPE 3912** is planning our own **survey** for sometime in June. BOTH are important and have different objectives.
- The next discussion in the CAUT Town Hall Series is on **COVID-19 and the Impact on Research**. Join an online forum discussion with the Tri-Councils on funding measures to address impact on research in the context of COVID-19, Thursday, May 21, 11:30 am to 1:00 pm EDT. [Register here for the May 21 webinar](#)
- CAUT has prepared [guidelines on re-opening universities and colleges](#). As with all of CAUT's advice and resources related to COVID-19, these guidelines will be updated as necessary as more information becomes available.

However, we have already heard that the Mount will not be re-opening soon as they have announced that the fall semester will be online. The situation has not been decided yet at SMU and Dal (as far as I know). Whatever the decision about the fall semester, we are doing our best at all three universities to support our members and minimize negative impacts of the universities' response to the pandemic. I am currently scheduling meetings with senior administration at all three universities.

Stay healthy everyone.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

May 4, 2020

Happy May 4th to all Star Wars fans! and belated Happy May Day to everyone!

- On that note, make sure to check out www.MayWorksHalifax.ca **Festival**, which is online and free this year.
- Don't forget to **RSVP by Wednesday for our AGM** this Friday. See details in Friday's email.
- We will be **holding elections** at the AGM. If you are interested in running for any positions, it would be best to let me know. We are particularly looking for **candidates for the Mount VP position**, as we know that Pat is retiring and will not run for re-election. Feel free to contact me for more information about any of the positions.
- This week's **CAUT Town Hall** on Thursday is specifically **on Contract Academic Staff**.
- We got some **news coverage of the open letter** released last week by the group of NS university unions.
- **CAUT released its own letter** asking the federal government for access to the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, tuition waivers and increased federal transfer to the provinces for post-secondary education.

Stay healthy everyone.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

April 28, 2020

- The first thing to tell you about is our **Annual General Meeting on May 8** (see poster for details). The important thing is that **you must RSVP by May 6**.
- We will be **holding elections** at the AGM (see poster for details). Here the important thing is to email me if you are interested in running for any of the positions and if you will not be able to attend. Voting may be during the meeting or immediately after.
- The Centre for Learning and Teaching at Dalhousie is offering a suite of **online panels, webinars and workshops**. Monitor the CLT website or Today@Dal for more information about upcoming events.
- From our VP for TAs at Studley campus: Many of our student members have been concerned about CERB eligibility. The government just announced that they will be rolling out a **Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB)** for students and recent graduates who are not eligible for CERB or EI. More information on the CESB and other additional supports for students can be found here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2020/04/support-for-students-and-recent-graduates-impacted-by-covid-19.html>
- I attended the latest CAUT Town Hall on **intellectual property**. One of the speakers said that the instructor owns their lectures, notes and presentations. I still find this issue complex, especially with online teaching, and we are looking into these issues at some of the universities.
- I am part of a **newly formed group** of representatives from all types of unions at all universities across Nova Scotia. This includes academic staff and also students, post-docs, lab technicians and more. I was also volunteered to be part of the communications team and a spokesperson.
- **BREAKING NEWS** This group has written an open letter to university administration and government representatives, which in part asks for additional funding for post-secondary education during this time. We sent it to government representatives and the media today. **Here is the letter.**
- Please see message below from the NS Federation of Labour about the **National Day of Mourning** (today).
- I've also included a message below about a **survey of workers' experiences** during a pandemic.

Stay healthy everyone.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

National Day of Mourning, join us tomorrow

Friend the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour vows to continue the fight to make every workplace a safe workplace every day of the week. Tomorrow is April 28 - the National Day of Mourning for workers killed or injured on the job.

We are asking that you join us tomorrow when we release a short video on Facebook, our web site and social media. We are asking everyone to pause for a few minutes at 11 am tomorrow to remember the workers lost in 2019 and for all those workers lost prior to that.

April the 28th, 2020 marks the first time that we are not able to gather and mark the National Day of Mourning for Workers Killed or Injured on the Job. The COVID-19 Pandemic has changed our day to day life in Nova Scotia, Canada and around the world.

In 2019, 22 workers died in Nova Scotia at or because of work. Twenty-two families suffered through the loss of a family member because of work - a devastating reminder about the importance of workplace safety.

The number of fatalities in 2019 reminds us just how much work remains to do with employers, our unions, workers and our other health and safety partners. We all must work towards ensuring every worker returns home at the end of the day safe and sound.

Did you know that every year in Canada, almost 1000 workers lose their lives on the job? Their deaths are preventable and should not happen.

The COVID-19 Pandemic has brought into harsh light what frontline and essential workers face every day in their workplaces. They are the ones who are going to keep us all safe. If their workplaces are not safe and they're not given the equipment they need, then the rest of us are not going to be safe.

We implore all employers to make sure workers on the frontline have the personal protective equipment during this time and for everybody to stay safe.

All workers have three basic rights in Nova Scotia:

1. The right to know about the dangers in their workplace,
2. The right to participate in workplace health and safety activities,
3. The right to refuse unsafe work.

We urge all employers is to keep all workplaces safe and healthy all the time and for governments to make sure that they have the strictest laws and the best prevention strategies, the best enforcement that we can have.

We will not relent on our dedication to safe workplaces and on this Day of Mourning, we reaffirm our solidarity and commitment to workplace health and safety and as we mourn the dead, we pledge to continue fighting for the living.

The Nova Scotia Federation of Labour will post a Day of Mourning video on April 28 at 11 am on its Facebook Page. We are urging our members to observe a moment of silence to remember the workers we have lost.

<http://nslabour.nationbuilder.com/>

Survey of Workers' Experiences During a Pandemic

The Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers, along with researchers and trade unions including CAUT, has developed a pan-Canadian survey on COVID-19 workplace experiences. It is very important that the views of university and college staff be heard in this survey as the data collected from their confidential participation will help with focused and accurate approaches to workplace health and safety and general working conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please encourage your members to participate by sharing the following message:

A Survey of Workers' Experiences During a Pandemic

This survey is designed to learn about your experiences as a worker during a pandemic.

The survey was put together by the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (OHCOW), with help from researchers at the Institute of Work & Health and Duke University in North

Carolina. We also had input from a number of health and safety union staff representatives, who told us about the concerns and questions their members have.

To access the survey please follow this

link: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/worker_survey.

During the pilot study, about half of the respondents took less than 20-25 minutes to complete the survey (the shortest time was 10 minutes). Those who went through the survey slowly and provided thoughtful comments took up to half an hour.

If you feel uncomfortable answering a question, skip it. All the information collected in this survey is confidential. Only the researchers directly involved in this project will see all the answers. The team will not keep any information that could identify you or others. All the data we collect will be stored on a secure server.

We intend to use the data collected for research and to share with research organizations. The data, analysis and related information may be used in presentations, websites, and union, trade, and academic publications.

If you have questions, please contact John Oudyk at joudyk@ohcow.on.ca

Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers

848 Main St E, Hamilton, Ontario, L8M 1L9

905-549-2552 / 1-800-263-2129 (in 905, 416, 519 area codes only)

Web: www.ohcow.on.ca

April 22?

- I hope you'll join us in planning our future at our rescheduled Annual General Meeting. We will have more details later, but for now we have a day and time: May 8 at 1 pm (online of course). We will be holding elections. Stay tuned for more information.
- ANSUT is organizing a presentation/workshop on indigenizing collective agreements in the morning of May 8.
- The Canadian Federation of Students has been doing a lot of work about how the response to covid-19 is affecting grad students. Check out their website: <https://www.cfs-fcee.ca/covid-19/>
- We're still considering how we can address the issue of home office expenses. For now, we advise you to keep any receipts. Please also let me know if you have had any major expenses and if your employer has reimbursed you for these expenses or has refused (e.g., head sets, internet sticks).

Stay healthy everyone.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Dear members,

I feel that we have reached the low point in these challenging times with this latest incomprehensible tragedy in our province. I am never sure what to say in these situation but I don't think anyone can find the words to express feelings about the loss and sorrow experienced by our fellow Nova Scotians. My family has often travelled in the area near Portapique and my

heart goes out to the residents, family, friends and neighbours as they grieve. I know that the universities have sent out messages of sorrow with resources on who to contact for assistance during these times, but please let me know if you need additional resources or assistance. I describe this as a low point because I am hopeful that we might start to come out of these troubled times and look to the future.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

April 15, 2020

It's been a while since my last update. For this one, I have recommendations for common issues that many of you are facing.

- **Summer course cancellations:** At SMU, the Mount and some faculties at Dal this should be YOUR decision. At Dal the dean does have authority over things like course cancellations but I have been told that you may reach out to your dean if your course has been cancelled even though you think you can teach it remotely. If that still doesn't work, please contact me or your CUPE VP. Decisions regarding summer course cancellations at Dal must be made by the end of this month.
- **Extra compensation** for time spent converting your course online: This does apply for summer courses at SMU. They will begin to consider this at the Mount. At Dal it is faculty dependent but it sounds like it is happening for some courses. If you think you should be compensated for extra time but you are not, I recommend contacting your dean and also keep track of your hours.
- **Home office use:** This is an issue I have been exploring and realizing it is complex. We may or may not be able to get the employer to cover extra expenses. For now I would suggest that you keep track of any extra expenses including receipts. If you feel that you had to have substantial extra expenses (e.g., purchase an internet stick because you live in a rural community without high-speed internet), it might be worthwhile contacting your dean.

As always, please contact me for further information on any of these items and feel free to share your experience with myself or your VP.

Stay healthy everyone.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

April 8, 2020

Today I have a few long messages from CUPE and CAUT:

- From CUPE: Here is a link to a **Statistics Canada survey** on the impacts of COVID-19 on those living in Canada: <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/survey/household/5311-COVID-19>. We would like to capture as many of our members' experiences as possible. It takes about 5 minutes to complete and closes on April 16.

- CAUT is organizing a **series of online town halls** to provide an opportunity for academic staff to ask questions and share experiences on particular issues raised by the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - COVID-19 has had an enormous impact, in a short period of time, on the academic workplace. CAUT is launching an online town hall series titled, *COVID-19 and the Academic Job*, to support academic staff in this constantly changing and uncertain time. Hosted by CAUT, you will hear from experts on a range of topics and discuss issues, your questions and share strategies and solutions.
 - The first French town hall will take place on Thursday, April 16 at 1pm (EDT) in partnership with the *Fédération québécoise des professeures et professeurs d'université (FQPPU)*. The first English town hall will take place on Thursday, April 16 at 2pm (EDT). These town halls will look at current and possible future impacts of the pandemic on academic work.
 - Future town hall topics will include:
 - Moving online: intellectual property and privacy issues
 - A conversation with SSHRC, NSERC and CIHR
 - Academic governance
 - **Addressing the unique impact on Contract Academic Staff**
 - For more information and to register for CAUT's Town Hall Series: COVID-19 and the Academic Job:
 - French: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8468578601196185868>
- 1pm (EDT)
 - English: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8567058559160790797>
- 2pm (EDT)
 - After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.
- CAUT put out a **press release**: Groups urge federal government to extend the CERB to students and contract staff
 - The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) and the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) are calling on the federal government to extend the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) to post-secondary students and contract academic staff.
 - “Students and contract academic staff are seeing their job offers vanish and will have limited or no income over the coming months because of the COVID-19 pandemic,” says CAUT Executive Director David Robinson. “We’re urging the government to ensure that students and our most vulnerable workers are not left behind.”
 - Many students and contract academic staff rely on income from spring and summer jobs to help make ends meet, but there are significantly fewer summer employment opportunities today than in a normal year.
 - With colleges and universities cancelling spring and summer courses, some contract academic staff may see their incomes reduced to below the \$2,000 per month provided through the CERB.
- CAUT distributed some information about remote teaching, some of which I copy here:

- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, universities and colleges in Canada have transitioned to remote instruction through various online platforms and software. Academic staff should be aware that these tools raise important privacy and intellectual property rights issues.
- **Surveillance:** Some software systems may allow administrators to conduct surveillance of online teaching activities. Such surveillance is unacceptable, as the institution has no more right to do so during the pandemic than it does under ordinary circumstances. No institution should be recording or transcribing online classes without the consent of the instructor and students.
- **Remote Teaching Platforms:** CAUT is aware that many video-conferencing platforms, such as Zoom, that are freely available online raise significant security and privacy concerns. Your institution should provide members with a licenced version of any software system. Video conferencing software should be encrypted and users should be able to restrict access to authorized participants only. Sessions should not be recorded or transcribed without the permission of the instructor. Academic staff should avoid setting up video conferencing accounts with their personal email address. Students should also be advised to use their institutional email addresses. Using common email domains (e.g. Outlook, Gmail, or Yahoo) may allow anyone with an email hosted by the same domain to access video sessions, since some platforms treat these emails as being within the same organization. Just as with on-campus teaching, it remains the institution's responsibility to ensure that remote teaching takes place in a secure and useable manner.
- **Privacy:** Provincial and federal privacy laws apply with remote teaching. This means that personal information about academic staff and students should not be disseminated publicly or online. Personal information can include email addresses, phone numbers, residential information, images, and videos. During remote instruction, academic staff and students should expect they have the same level of privacy as they would during an on-campus lecture or seminar. Academic staff may wish to include a privacy statement at the start of each session, or distribute to students in advance. The statement should include a reminder that privacy laws and expectations continue, and that students must not record any audio or video of any online classes for any purpose other than personal study or accommodation.
- **Intellectual Property and Copyright:** Since the collective agreement still applies, the content of remote teaching sessions remains the intellectual property of the academic staff member. Students should be warned that although it may be easier to record or transcribe lectures and discussions through online platforms, it remains their responsibility to refrain from distributing those recordings or transcriptions. Posting material online would violate the privacy and copyright interests of the instructor and fellow students. Academic staff who share teaching materials with colleagues or the institution should include messages that by sharing, they do not relinquish their copyright and ownership in the materials. Misuse or further distribution without express permission should be prohibited.

Stay healthy everyone.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,
Karen Harper
President, CUPE 3912
Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

April 3, 2020

I think this is the end of week 3, although time itself seems to have changed these days. We were supposed to have our Annual General Meeting today when I was going to announce the results of our online vote on bargaining proposals after our information sessions last week. How times have changed! Even in this new reality, I hope you can find some time to enjoy the weekend by taking a break from work and getting outside, even if it's just looking at crocuses in your backyard.

Here are some updates and information:

- There has been some miscommunication about **TAs continuing to get paid** until the end of term. Apparently this was only the case if TAs could find other work to do such as grading. But the messaging has been department or faculty-specific.
- I have been part of a group of union presidents or representatives at Dalhousie University that has now expanded to include other universities. Yesterday we put out a **press release** about an **all-union statement** calling on universities to ensure open communication, accountability and transparency.
- CAUT sent an update email that included some good information about **CERB for part-time instructors** and **caution about using Zoom**. I have included these directly below.
- Now to end with some good news. **Mayworks is going digital!** Check it out in May.

Stay healthy everyone.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,
Karen Harper
President, CUPE 3912
Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

From CAUT:

The CERB: What does it mean for contract academic staff?

The federal government's new Canada Emergency Relief Benefit (CERB) will provide temporary income support of \$500 per week for up to 16 weeks for Canadians who have lost income because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The benefit may be particularly important for contract academic staff, who often lack adequate paid sick leave and may be facing job loss or non-renewal. More information about the CERB can be found [here](#).

Security flaws in Zoom lead to disruptions in classes

Many academic staff have been using Zoom for meetings and remote teaching. However, many are now raising security and privacy concerns with the program. Some Zoom-held classes have been [disrupted](#) by internet trolls and privacy issues are [plaguing](#) the program.

If you continue to use Zoom:

- Be aware that when you share your Zoom meeting link on social media or other public forums, anyone can click the link to join your meeting.

- Avoid using your [Personal Meeting ID \(PMI\)](#) to host public events. [Learn about meeting IDs](#) and how to generate a random meeting ID in this [video tutorial](#).
- Familiarize yourself with Zoom's privacy settings and features so you understand how to protect your virtual space.

Read more [here](#).

March 31, 2020

Here are a few updates as well as resources available through CUPE about financial support.

- At SMU, we helped the administration to develop a strategy for summer courses that includes extra compensation and leaves the decision as to whether it can be converted to an online course up to the instructor. This strategy has been distributed to department chairs, whom you can consult for further details.
- At Dal, I will now have weekly meetings with the director of academic staff relations.
- Also at Dal, again please let me know about any cancelled courses – course name and number, the entire program or just the course, when was it cancelled and by whom.
- Here is a link to information put out by CUPE about the emergency benefit and other economic support: <https://cupe.ca/income-supports-workers-during-coronavirus-pandemic>
- This article might also be useful for questions about financial support.
- This email from the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour contains some interesting and useful information.

Stay healthy everyone.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

March 27, 2020

It's been a few days since my last update and two weeks since our world changed on Friday the 13th. Since then it is clear to me that the most common issues for our members are the (possible) cancellation of summer courses and extra work to put courses online and whether that will result in extra compensation. I want to assure you that we are working on this at all universities and should have more to share about this next week.

- TAs/markers/demonstrators should **keep track of your hours** and let your instructor know if reach the end of your hours in your contract.
- I found out that at Dalhousie, deans make the decisions about **cancelling summer courses**. It would be good for us to keep track. Please let me know if the course you were going to teach this summer has been cancelled and whether you were involved in the decision.
- I hope you are all reading the relevant **messages from your universities**. I sometimes copy some of the highlights here, but not always. For example, today SMU sent an email clarifying their policy on course evaluations and providing instructions.

- Today I participated in a video call with representatives from other unions at Dalhousie to discuss **communication** at Dal. At the Mount and especially SMU I have had very good communication with senior administration, and that has started somewhat today at Dal as well. I think better communication with our employer is key to providing support for you.
- At Dal, TAs who are students can access a special **fund for financial assistance**. Others can reach out as well if you are experiencing financial hardship as a result of lost wages. You should contact the director of your program and the HR person in your program.
- For example, for **Dal clinical instructors**, you should contact Cathie.Smith-Gillis@dal.ca, the Director of HR in the Faculty of Health if you are experiencing financial hardship due to the suspension of in-person labs within the Faculty of Health.
- At Dal there is a new **Remote Working site** for changes in employee services impacted by COVID-19, information about working remotely, and helpful resources related to wellness, learning and technology. Visit the site online via SharePoint (Dal NetID login required): <https://dal.sharepoint.com/sites/remoteworking>
- I can't remember where this came from (I think the Mount), but here are some links to **mental health services**:
 - Employee & Family Assistance Program (or EFAP) – Shepell - <https://www.workhealthlife.com/Search/HeaderSearchResources> (free, confidential counselling services for MSVU faculty and staff)
 - Strongest Families Institute (Nova Scotia Health Authority) <https://strongestfamilies.com/> (a resource for parents/guardians)
 - Canadian Mental Health Association <https://cmha.ca/news/covid-19-and-mental-health>

I hope everyone is able to enjoy the weekend and get outside at least for a bit. Take care of yourselves.

Stay healthy everyone.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

March 23, 2020

We continue to encounter problems with the transition online at Dal but still have some uncertainty at SMU and the Mount.

- But I do want to reiterate good news from Dal that one of our VPs received: "There will be no disruption to **TA payment**. I encourage you to connect with your Instructors for updates on changes if they have not already reached out to you."
- Also at Dal, the **course evaluations** are now formative as at the other universities. 'Student Ratings of Instruction (SRIs) for the 2020 Winter, Spring and Summer Terms will be entirely formative. None of the results will be provided to any department heads, chairs, or deans.'
- I was very pleased to read a **good news story** on Saturday morning on the CBC National website from the Mount! <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/will-brewer-down-syndrom-mount-saint-vincent-university-student-union-election-1.5499246>

Congratulations to Will Brewer on his election as Mount Student Association president. I met him at our table just last month and he is very supportive of our campaign.

Stay healthy everyone.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

March 20, 2020

Happy Spring!

Here's the latest:

- **Research activities** have been suspended at Dal and SMU; I'm not sure at the Mount. There are some exceptions and personally I am hoping they might clarify what this means for field work at SMU. If this affects you, I suggest reading the emails carefully.
- **The Mount** actually gave us some guidance about **student evaluations** earlier this week. See one of my earlier updates but essentially they are optional.
- I have open lines of **communication** with the VP Academic at the Mount and SMU, and I am trying to establish the same at Dal. I am hoping this will allow me to help address your concerns more easily, particularly regarding summer courses.
- I received an email today from CUPE National with a file about income support and the link to provincial government information and updates on COVID-19:
<https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/>
- I found out that **Quebec** is instituting the draconian measure of suspending collective agreements for teachers. I am not sure what level but apparently their assignments, schedules and workplaces could be modified at any time. This is very unfortunate.

Congratulations everyone! You have made it through the first week of this new reality. From what I have heard, it seems to have gone better than can be expected, although I do realize there are unfortunate exceptions. I really hope that you will take time off this weekend to breathe, exercise, get outside, dance inside, spend time with your family at home or reach out to your extended family and friends by phone or video conference. Do whatever you need to do to take care of yourself and your loved ones.

Stay healthy everyone.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

March 19, 2020

Thanks to those of you who reached out to let me know you appreciate these updates and that things are progressing smoothly as can be expected, and to those of you who let me know where they are not. Please remember to continue to let us know if you have any concerns or issues, especially during this stressful time. **Contact your VP if you think you are being treated**

unfairly, whether or not it is due to our current situation. We are also working on other ways to help our members during this time. Let us know how you think we can help.

- Our bargaining teams have decided to **postpone the information sessions** scheduled for next week and the vote on the bargaining proposals the week after to give you more time to adjust to our new reality both in terms of your work and family. When the time is right, we will continue with our agenda to Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro. I will let you know.
- Although it appears that the transfer of courses to online delivery is going well this semester (with some exceptions), there have been more concerns over what is happening with **spring and summer courses**. We are looking into issues regarding this. If you have any concerns or aware of any work-related issues with summer courses, please contact your VP or me.
- The administration at **SMU** contacted me to clarify some confusion about **course evaluations**. They state, ‘The Employer agrees to waive requirements under Article 15.04 for this term.’ (article copied below) They further say that PT faculty can use evaluations for formative purposes if they so choose (ie they are optional). Please contact me if you wish to see the faculty notice about this.
- Finally – I don’t usually even look at YouTube videos let alone share them, but I thought this one might help lighten people’s moods. It is being shared on the CAUT email listserv: https://www.insidehighered.com/quicktakes/2020/03/17/%E2%80%98i-will-survive%E2%80%99-teaching-online?utm_source=Academica+Top+Ten&utm_campaign=28d021b0fb-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_03_17_07_27&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_b4928536cf-28d021b0fb-51993705

Stay healthy everyone.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

SMU

15.04 Student evaluations of teaching, using the Senate-approved Instructor/Course Evaluation form, shall be carried out in each course taught by a part-time faculty member. Multiple-choice responses and other coded material gathered in this way as a result of any collective teacher evaluation authorized by the Senate or any Faculty of Saint Mary's University shall not be considered anonymous material under the terms of Clause 15.03. Comments and remarks written by respondents during such evaluations are anonymous material under the terms of Clause 15.03, unless the Senate or a Faculty of Saint Mary's University specifically specifies otherwise. Signed comments are confidential, but may be revealed to the part-time faculty member they concern without identifying their authors.

March 18, 2020

I am surprised how few emails I have received from members in the last few days. Please feel free to email me if you have any concerns or questions in this challenging time. Our VPs and I

are here to help. I am in contact with faculty associations, the Canadian Association of University Teachers, CUPE National, CUPE Nova Scotia and university administrations so I can access various resources to provide assistance.

Here are some messages from today that might be useful.

- I found out that at Dalhousie, the Faculty of Arts and Social Science sent an email with the following message: ‘**TAs and Markers** should be communicating with instructors to clarify their responsibilities during this difficult transition and should be providing assistance (if required) with end-of-term planning (e.g., moving exams online; compiling final grades; etc.). TA contracts will be honoured financially regardless of whether or not assignments or exams have been cancelled.’ I expect and hope that the last sentence is true for all Dalhousie TAs and Markers.
- I received an email from HR at **SMU**. They encourage us to monitor <https://smu.ca/covid19/> for updates as they become available. And they note that we can use the services of The Studio for Teaching and Learning should we require support with our courses.
- Our VP at **Dalhousie** has been in contact with admin. The message to instructors there is to consider only the barest needs for your class and to deliver only what’s absolutely necessary. They are working on a plan for the exams period and semester end, and give some advice about final exams and alternatives.

Stay healthy everyone.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

March 17, 2020

Dear members,

I will send more frequent updates as needed over the next few weeks. I hope and expect you are reading all the email messages from the universities, which are informing us about what is cancelled and closed etc. I think recent ones have been more informative, but remember to contact your VP if you have any concerns.

- **The Mount** is the only university that has reached out specifically to part-timers through an email to me. Here are some excerpts: ‘We wish to clarify that part-time instructors have autonomy as to how to manage their courses. Instructors are not required to convert their courses to online formats, but are expected to draw on their experience and professionalism to find fair and flexible ways to bring their courses to a successful conclusion, to adjust assessment criteria appropriately, and to arrive at fair and just and equitable grades for students. Student Ratings of Instruction Questionnaires (SRIQ’s) can be optional for this term and for full-year courses that will be finishing this term. There will be no repercussions if an instructor chooses not to administer an evaluation. If an instructor wishes to proceed with SRIQs, they should contact the Dean’s office at deanoff@msvu.ca to have those student evaluations administered online.’
- **CUPE National** also has some recommendations, specifically to consider reliable links such as to those through the NS government website and NS Health authority, and the

link to apply for Sick Employment insurance benefits as part of the federal support measures included waiving of the 1 week waiting period if your employment is affected by shutdown of business and or quarantine. I am not sure this affects us but it might be useful. Here are the links:

- <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus>
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/notices/coronavirus.html>
- We will still hold **Information Sessions** to discuss bargaining proposals at the original dates and times. Please participate in the one for your bargaining unit if possible, but feel free to join another instead if you are not available. We will use GoToMeeting and conduct these sessions as webinars with audio for the presenter only and shared screen but no video; questions will be through the Chat function. We will send invites to these sessions later this week. We will go over the bargaining proposals we intend to bring the table during negotiations.
 - Monday March 23 at 2 pm Dal Sexton TAs
 - Tuesday March 24 at noon Truro
 - Wednesday March 25 at noon Mount
 - Wednesday March 25 at 5:30 pm SMU
 - Thursday March 26 at 1:30 pm Dal Studley TAs
 - Friday March 27 at 3 pm Dalhousie PT Halifax
- The **online vote on the bargaining proposals** (to get a bargaining mandate) will go ahead as planned April 1-2. Emails for voting will be sent later this month.
- The **Annual General Meeting** is postponed until further notice. With elections normally done in-person, switching to an online format would be quite a challenge. We will either wait until we can conduct it in person or if it looks like this will go on for months we will figure out something.

Stay healthy everyone.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

March 16, 2020

Dear members,

I hope you are all staying healthy mentally as well as physically. As we all know, things are happening very rapidly with many changes as the entire academic community seems to be going online. It is a challenge to figure how to best support and assist you because this situation is unprecedented for all of us and we are all learning about new developments together. As always, we are here to help you maintain fair working conditions as best as we can. Please feel free to contact us (CUPE 3912 executive) about any concerns or issues you have.

- Your **first contact should be your respective VP** who has the best expertise about the situation at your university. But if you receive no response, feel free to contact me.
- We are working on some ideas to **assist members** in need. Please stay tuned and expect more emails in the next week as we adjust to our new reality.

- We are also looking at ways to **help members with communication** about changing teaching and working conditions.
- Please feel free to **pass on your ideas** about how we can help. This unusual situation will require some creative solutions.
- The Teaching and Learning Centres at each university are providing support and consultation regarding online instruction so they would be a good place to start if you need **assistance with online teaching**. At Dal, the message is "please use COVID-19 and include your course number or name in the subject heading in order for us to prioritize your request. " clt@dal.ca
- I also came across this article about online teaching:
https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2020/03/11/practical-advice-instructors-faced-abrupt-move-online-teaching-opinion?utm_source=Academica+Top+Ten&utm_campaign=900d008990-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_03_11_06_57&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_b4928536cf-900d008990-47741101
- The **bargaining information sessions** planned for next week (March 23-27) will probably be **held online as webinars**. We would keep the same times (March 23 at 2 Dal Sexton TAs, March 24 at noon Truro, March 25 at noon Mount, March 25 at 5:30 SMU, March 26 at 1:30 Studley TAs, March 27 at 3 Dal PT). Watch for an email for confirmation later this week.
- The Canadian Labour Congress is organizing a **free online webinar** on ‘How to be a trans ally’ at 1 pm EST on March 31, 2020. ‘This webinar will help union leaders, representatives and staff learn about why being a trans ally in the workplace matters, and what we can do together to make our workplaces and our communities safer and more inclusive for trans people’. <https://caut.us11.list-manage.com/track/click?u=6f34f95050d01054def96de44&id=3808e72872&e=7412f65491>
- **Byrony House** is looking for board members to advocate for women’s shelters.
- For this week’s excerpts from the collective agreements, I decided to look at what happens **if the university cancels a course**, although this is generally thought to occur at the start of a semester.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

Dal

14.10 (a) All offers of employment as a Part-Time Academic are conditional upon sufficient student enrolment in the course and approval by the Employer.

(b) If a Part-Time Academic course is cancelled after an offer of employment has been made by the university, and accepted by the applicant, the applicant shall be paid a cancellation stipend of one hundred and fifty dollars (\$150.00) or two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250.00) if cancellation occurs within two (2) weeks prior to the start of classes, during the Fall or Winter terms only.

Mount

12.17 Where a letter of appointment, which has been signed by both the applicant and the Vice-President (Academic) is cancelled by the University, the applicant shall be paid a cancellation fee of \$200, or \$300 if cancellation occurs within two weeks prior to the start of class.

12.17.1 If a course is team-taught, the applicants shall share the cancellation fee.

12.17.2 The cancellation fee shall be the same amount regardless of the credit value of the course.

SMU

16.06 Where a contract for a course assignment which has been signed by the applicant and the Vice-President, Academic and Research, and has been cancelled by the University, the applicant shall be paid a cancellation stipend of two hundred dollars (\$200), or three hundred dollars (\$300) if cancellation occurs within two (2) weeks prior to the start of classes during the academic year and/or in the summer semesters. If cancellation occurs between the start of classes and the last day of the Add and Drop Period outlined in Academic Regulation 13 of the University Academic Calendar, the applicant shall be paid on a pro-rated basis for the classes taught and shall be credited with a pro-rated number of precedence points.

March 9, 2020

This past week we have been hearing a lot about Covid-19. One of the measures to take to avoid spreading the disease is to take **sick leave** but this can be difficult for precarious workers (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/sick-leave-precarious-workers-covid-19-1.5484716>). What does this mean for us? I decided to make this the topic of this weeks' excerpts from the collective agreements – see below.

- Dave has a **new email**: outreach.cupe3912@gmail.com
- We have **results of the surveys** and I have read through all your comments. We will consider all responses as we develop our bargaining proposals. Please remember that although everyone has valid concerns about our working conditions, they can be quite varied and sometimes contradict each other. Don't forget that if you have a question, you can always ask me, and if you have a concern, please contact your VP because it might be an issue for a grievance rather than bargaining.
- We will present a **summary of the survey responses** at our information sessions. Here I just have a few highlights. The majority of respondents for the PT survey were female with a substantial proportion of members who identify as visible minority. The number of our PT members with a household income less than a salary of a typical post-doctoral fellow or even below the poverty level is particularly concerning. The top priorities are salary (no surprise!), continuing appointments and benefits. Most TAs and markers are graduate students who TA or mark for the money and experience. Their priorities are a pay increase, ensuring working hours do not increase and earlier postings.
- Here are the dates and times for the **information sessions** on bargaining proposals in each bargaining unit. If you can't attend one for your bargaining unit, you are welcome to attend another one; proposals will not vary much between universities. If you cannot attend any of the sessions, please contact outreach.cupe3912@gmail.com or president.cupe3912@gmail.com. **Note that bargaining proposals will only be available at the information sessions or by request and will NOT be distributed by email or paper.

- Tuesday March 24 at noon Riverview Room, Jenkins Hall, Truro
 - Wednesday March 25 at noon Seton 404, Mount
 - Wednesday March 25 at 5:30 pm Loyola 275, SMU
 - Thursday March 26 at 1:30 pm location tbd, Dal Studley TAs
 - Friday March 27 at 3 pm McCain 2016, Dalhousie PT Halifax
 - Tbd Dal Sexton TAs
- The **ratification vote** on the bargaining proposals will be online only on April 1 and 2. Note that this is NOT a strike vote. Voting yes for the bargaining proposals means that you agree in principal with the proposals and gives the bargaining teams a mandate from the membership. It is important as it provides membership support during negotiations. Before the vote you will receive an email with further instructions.
 - The **Annual General Meeting** is at 3 pm on April 3 in SUB 302 at Dalhousie University. The agenda will include results from the bargaining proposals ratification votes from each university, a vote on minor revisions to the bylaws and elections of about half of the executive positions (president, VPs PT instructors at all 3 unviersities, VP TAs at Dalhousie Sexton Campus, recording secretary), membership officer and a trustee. If you are interested in being nominated for any of these positions, please contact me for more information on the process.
 - The faculty association at Nipissing University voted to endorse the Precarious Historical Instructors' Manifesto (<http://activehistory.ca/2020/02/precarious-historical-instructors-manifesto/>). This manifesto has interesting calls to action regarding part-time instructors for departments, faculty associations and professional groups. I particularly noted 'Write contract workers' research into your grant applications'. I am a successful researcher, yet in almost fifteen years no one at the three universities has invited me to be included in group grant applications.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

SMU

22.01 The Employer agrees that if a part-time faculty member has to miss up to three (3) class hours per course per term because of illness, a death in the family, or other legitimate reason, there will be no deduction of pay from the stipend received by the faculty member. The part-time faculty member shall notify the Department Chair or designate of such absence. The faculty member shall ensure that students are notified and that all course material will be covered by the end of the semester.

Mount

18.1 The Employer agrees that if a part-time faculty member has to miss up to three class hours per course per term because of illness or other legitimate reason, there will be no deduction of pay from the stipend received by the member. The member shall ensure that all course material will be covered by the end of the term. The member shall notify the Department Chair, the Dean, via email, as well as the class cancellation line prior to the absence.

18.1.1 Where a member is required to miss more than three class hours per course per term because of illness or other legitimate reason, the member may make a request for an extended leave to the Dean. Such extensions are subject to advanced approval by the Dean, and the member may be required to provide documentation to substantiate the leave in a form suitable to the Employer. Such requests shall not be unreasonably denied.

23.8 Employees who are unable to fulfil the duties of their contract due to becoming disabled will be paid seventy five percent (75%) of the stipend for the balance of their contract provided the Employee is not covered under any other disability plan. The Employee shall apply for such payment by submitting a completed Application Form (Appendix F) and a Medical Information Form completed by the attending physician in a form which is satisfactory to the Employer. In accordance with the specified application form, the employee claiming payment under these provisions must declare that the employee has become disabled by reason of a medically determinable physical or mental impairment that prevents the employee from fulfilling the duties of employment and which cannot be accommodated by the Employer. The provisions of this Article are not intended to provide general sick leave or leave for scheduled elective medical procedures.

Dal

21.1 A Part-Time Academic or Teaching Assistant shall be granted leave of absence for up to three (3) class hours per assignment per term due to illness and there will be no loss of pay from the remuneration received by the Part-Time Academic employee or Teaching Assistant provided that the Part-Time Academic or Teaching Assistant ensures that all course material will be covered by the end of the term.

21.3 Clinical Instructors shall be granted leave of absence for up to two (2) days of work per term because of illness or a death in the family and there will be no loss of pay from the remuneration received by the Clinical Instructor.

March 2, 2020

Thank-you for your great response rate to our **surveys!** We will spend the next few weeks looking over the results and incorporating them into the bargaining proposals we are currently developing. The next step will be **information sessions** on the bargaining proposals in each bargaining unit in late March followed by an **online ratification vote** on the bargaining proposals with results announced at our **Annual General Meeting** on April 3. Stay tuned for details.

- Dave, our former part-time liaison, has an expanded position with a new name as our new **Outreach Coordinator**. We have merged his position with the webmaster position. Amy, our current webmaster, will continue for a bit longer while she trains Dave before she delves further into her PhD in Montreal.
- We had some sad news about one of the CUPE 3912 founders and former officer, **Joyce Conrad**, who passed away last week. She taught in Women's Studies and Sociology at the Mount and SMU. After hearing about this, I realized I should learn more about the **history of CUPE 3912** so I read the history section of our website – very interesting!
- We are working on our **next newsletter**. If anyone would like to contribute any material, please contact communications.cupe3912@gmail.com. We hope to include articles from your perspective.

- Today I met with **Geoff Regan, Liberal MP** for Halifax West, which includes the Mount, along with Julia Wright, president of the Dalhousie Faculty Association. We explained the situation of inadequate funding to universities and asked for a substantial increase in funding to alleviate the working conditions of part-time instructors, especially here in Nova Scotia. He gave a very political response that funding is tight, the budget has already been decided but he would consider it for next year. I was surprised at how little he understood about post-secondary education, especially the difference between part-time instructors and full-time faculty. It gave me some experience in how to talk to politicians.
- This week's excerpts from our collective agreements are on **professional development funds** – see below.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

MOUNT

16.5 Professional Development

The Employer and the Union acknowledge the importance of professional development for its members. The Employer shall provide a fund, to a maximum of \$4000.00 per fiscal year.

Effective April 1, 2017, the employer shall provide a fund, to a maximum of \$6000.00 per fiscal year. Each member may apply to a maximum of \$500.00 per fiscal year.

16.5.1 The fund shall be used to support members presenting papers or participating in panels at academic conferences or attending academic conferences and/or teaching and learning conferences.

16.5.2 All applications must be submitted in advance of the conference to the member's Dean. To be eligible, members must be on the precedence list and have taught a minimum of one full credit in the previous twelve (12) months. Applications shall be granted in order of application date.

SMU

24.06 The University and the Union acknowledge the importance of professional development for part-time faculty. The Employer shall provide a fund to a maximum of \$5,500 annually with individual awards up to a maximum of \$600. The awards will be evaluated and granted on a first-come, first-served basis. The fund shall be used to support Employees presenting papers or participating in panels at academic conferences and/or attending relevant professional development opportunities; e.g. teaching and learning workshops related to their duties and responsibilities. Proposals shall be approved by the Vice-President, Academic and Research on the recommendation of the appropriate Dean. To be eligible Employees must be on the precedence list and have taught a minimum of 1.0 FCE's in the previous twelve (12) months. Successful applicants will be notified in writing with a copy to the union.

DAL

18.5 (b) The University and the Union acknowledge the importance of professional development for Part-Time Academic faculty. The Employer shall provide a fund up to a maximum of \$5,000

per academic year with awards up to a maximum of \$500 per Part-Time Academic. A Part-Time Academic shall only be entitled to one award per academic year. The awards will be evaluated and granted on a first-come, first served basis. The fund shall be used to support employees presenting papers or participating in panels at academic conferences and/or attending relevant professional development opportunities. Proposals shall be approved by the Vice President Academic & Provost or designate on the recommendation by the appropriate Dean. To be eligible, the Part-Time Academic must be on the precedence list, and hold an appointment at the time of the conference and/or event. Successful applicants will be notified in writing with a copy to the union.

(c) At the end of each fiscal year, any funds remaining under Article 18.5(b) will be used to reimburse eligible applicants presenting papers or participating in panels at academic conferences and/or teaching and learning conference not initially funded in order of application date.

February 24, 2020

Welcome back!

- REMINDER to please complete the **survey(s)** if you have not already for PT instructors and TAs, markers and demonstrators. Thanks to all those who have!
- We have been made aware of **teaching positions that are NOT part of CUPE 3912 but should be** such as some lab coordinator and lab instructor positions at SMU. ***Please contact me if you are aware of any such positions.***
- This week is CAUT's **Fair Dealing Week** to raise awareness about the benefits of a balanced Copyright Act, for both users and creators, educators and students. Users' rights under the Copyright Act, hard won after many years of advocacy, have been under attack. The new trade deal with the United States and Mexico has also put copyright extension on the horizon. This will diminish the availability of content and shrink the public domain; it is important that fair dealing be protected and enhanced.
- Equity Watch is holding an **Anti-Bullying Day**, Feb 26 in front of Province House on Granville St., Halifax. Wear Pink. Nova Scotia is the **ONLY PROVINCE IN CANADA** to neither have nor have announced legislation prohibiting psychological harassment in the workplace.
- This week's excerpts from our collective agreements are on **getting paid for supervision**. This is included in our agreement at the Mount and in the agreement for the faculty union at SMU (especially or only for adjunct faculty). I do not know of any provision for us to get paid for supervision at Dal.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

MOUNT

Appendix B: Non-Bargaining Unit Work

Letter of Understanding between the Board of Governors of Mount Saint Vincent University and the Canadian Union of Public Employees

The Employer and the Union agree that Thesis and Masters' project supervision, directed study, independent study, challenge examinations and the supervision of student teaching are not bargaining unit work and therefore, not included in workload provisions. However, should a member of the bargaining unit perform such tasks they shall be compensated at the same rate of pay as full time faculty.

SMU Faculty Union agreement

16.5.1 Stipends for Thesis Supervision

- Faculty Members shall be entitled to compensation for thesis supervision of students enrolled at Saint Mary's University as follows:
- (a) Primary supervision of masters theses: for every completed thesis, \$1,581 honorarium, effective September 2018; \$1,605 effective September 2019; \$1,629 effective September 2020.
- (b) Primary supervision of major research projects (MRPs) as a part of the Masters of Business Administration or Executive Masters of Business Administration programs: for every completed MRP, \$792 honorarium effective September 2018; \$804 effective September 2019, \$816 effective September 2020.
- (c) Primary supervision of undergraduate honors theses: for every completed thesis, \$441 honorarium, effective September 2018; \$448 effective September 2019; \$455 effective September 2020.

February 17, 2020

Happy Heritage Day and Feb Break! As you relax this week, I hope you will take the time to reflect on our working conditions and let us know what you are concerned about by completing our bargaining survey. If you are a TA and part-time instructor, please complete both. Both surveys will be open until the end of the month. Thanks for your input!

- **Bargaining survey for part-time instructors:** [LINK](#)
- **Bargaining survey for TAs, marker and demonstrators:** [LINK](#)
- Thanks to all you volunteered or stopped by our **tables** this past week. We also had visits from supportive full-time faculty and especially students, many of whom asked what they could do to help.
- **Posters** have been displayed on all campuses. Please check them out!
- **REMINDER** The event for TAs with the Centre for Learning and Teaching at Dal **UNION 101: How CUPE 3912 can support you as a TA and beyond** will be held 12-1 on Monday February 24 in Killam Library, Room B400, and in Truro (via video-conference) in FCC Meeting Room 228.
- Applications for several **CUPE Nova Scotia awards** are available on the CUPE NS website with a deadline of March 15:
 - two \$1,000 CUPE Higgins Insurance Scholarships for children of CUPE 3912 members attending university in 2020-2021;
 - two Occupational Health and Safety Awards to an individual and a committee for significant contributions to health and safety;
 - \$1,000 Rocky Jones Bursary for an African or Indigenous Nova Scotian student;
 - Steward of the Year Award;

- Mike McNeil Weeklong School Scholarship to cover the registration fee to attend the CUPE Atlantic Weeklong School.
- The NS Federation of Labour also has a **Sister of the Year Award** for a fellow union sister who has proven their dedication to the trade union movement and the advancement of women's voices. The deadline is this Wednesday Feb. 19.
- This week's excerpts from our collective agreements are on **academic freedom**. I have noticed that the language for academic freedom is very different for us at the three universities. Which do you think would protect us the most? I've also included the language on academic freedom from the DFA collective agreement, which is very different from ours at Dal. See below.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

MOUNT

7.1 Members shall be accorded academic freedom in carrying out their duties, including designing and presenting a course, insofar as the employee abides by the course design, contents and methods of delivery as determined by the Employer. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Employer reserves the right to specify what teaching materials are to be used in order to conform to course descriptions, program's curriculum and requirements to meet academic objectives of the academic unit and/or the Employer.

7.2 The Employer and the Union agree to abide by the principles of academic freedom as expressed in the following statement: academic freedom involves the right to teach, investigate, speculate, and publish without deference to prescribed doctrine and free from institutional censorship. It involves the right to criticize the University. The right to academic freedom carries with it the duty to use that freedom in a responsible way.

7.3 Academic freedom does not confer legal immunity, nor does it diminish the obligation of members to meet their responsibilities as defined in this Agreement.

SMU

21.01 Part-time faculty with primary responsibility for designing a course shall be accorded academic freedom in that work.

21.02 The search for knowledge and its free exposition are vital to the purposes of the University and to the common good of society. Academic freedom is essential to those purposes and is the right of every faculty member with respect to his/her teaching activities. In the classroom, employees may select, present and discuss material relevant to the objectives of the course. They may also express opinion provided in doing so the faculty member shall show respect for the opinion of others, have due regard for the best interests of the University and make every effort to indicate that he/she is not acting as spokesperson for the University. The faculty member's right to academic freedom carries with it the duty to use that freedom in a responsible way, consistent with fair and ethical dealings with students and colleagues, consistent with the scholarly obligation to base teaching on an honest search for knowledge and consistent with the faculty member's performance of teaching and other responsibilities under

this agreement. Academic freedom does not confer legal immunity, nor does it diminish the obligation of employees to meet their contractual responsibilities to the University.

DAL

20.1 Part-Time Academics with primary responsibility for presenting or designing a course shall be accorded academic freedom to present or design a course insofar as the employee abides by the course design, contents and methods of delivery as determined by the Employer.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Employer reserves the right to specify what teaching materials are to be used in order to conform to course descriptions, programs curriculum and requirements to meet academic objectives of the academic unit and/or the Employer. In academic units where it is the practice to consult with academic staff with respect to texts and course syllabi for coordinated, multi-section courses, this practice will be extended to Part-Time Academics assigned to teach such courses where it is practicable in the circumstances to do so.

20.2 The right to academic freedom carries with it the duty to use that freedom in a responsible way, with due regard to the rights of others and due concern for the duties appropriate to the placement. Academic freedom does not confer legal immunity nor does it diminish the obligation of Part-Time Academic employees to meet the duties and responsibilities of their assignment.

DAL Faculty Association

3.01- The Parties recognize and affirm that academic freedom is essential to the fulfillment of the purpose of Dalhousie University in the search for knowledge and the communication of knowledge to students, colleagues and society at large. The Parties agree that academic freedom carries with it a corresponding responsibility on the part of Members to use their freedom responsibly, with due concern for the rights of others, for the duties appropriate to the Member's university appointment, and for the welfare of society. Academic freedom does not confer legal immunity either inside or outside Dalhousie University, nor does it prevent collective self-governance and peer evaluation as conducted or approved by the Senate or by other academic, research or professional bodies whether within or outside Dalhousie University. Academic freedom does not require neutrality on the part of the individual. Rather, academic freedom makes commitment possible.

3.02- The Parties agree that they will not infringe or abridge the academic freedom of any member of the academic community. Members of the bargaining unit are entitled to freedom, as appropriate to the Member's university appointment, in carrying out research and in publishing the results thereof, freedom of teaching and of discussion, freedom to criticize, including criticism of the Board and the Association, and freedom from institutional censorship.

3.03- Academic freedom, as appropriate to the Member's university appointment, implies protection of Members by the Board and the Association from pressure intended to hinder or prevent them pursuing their scholarly and research interests and communicating the results thereof to students, colleagues and the community at large. The Parties acknowledge this responsibility, whether such pressure emanates from inside or outside the University.

February 10, 2020

Hello CUPE 3912. This week is our CAMPAIGN!! You will see **posters** across the campuses about our working conditions and how they compare with other universities. We will also have information at tables:

- SUB at Dal 10-2 on Monday and 10-1 on Thursday
- SUB at SMU 10-3 on Wednesday and 11-3 on Thursday
- RBC tunnel near the library at the Mount 3-5 on Tuesday and 11-2 on Friday

Please stop by to talk to me or one of our volunteers.

***Our bargaining **SURVEY** for part-time instructors is available now until the end of February. It is VERY important that as many part-time instructors as possible complete this short survey as it will help inform our bargaining proposals. The link is:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CUPE3912bargainingPT>

We will send reminders over the next few weeks. The TA survey should be ready in a few days.

- Clare, our VP for TAs on Studley campus, has organized an event for TAs with the Centre for Learning and Teaching at Dal. **UNION 101: How CUPE 3912 can support you as a TA and beyond** will be held 12-1 on Monday February 24 in Killam Library, Room B400, and in Truro (via video-conference) in FCC Meeting Room 228. See <https://events-tm.dal.ca/workshop.php?id=3248>
- Members at the Mount may have seen the email about the **L'nu Advisory Circle**. They are currently seeking new First Nations community members for the committee. If you are interested and would like assistance contacting them, please let me know.
- Also at the Mount, VP Pat and I met with the Mount's VP Admin to discuss their **budget planning**. We expressed our concerns that the budget committee had representatives from full-time faculty and the student union, but not from CUPE 3912. The VP Admin promised to consider this for the next time but said he couldn't do anything about it now. We also advised him that we will be asking for a substantial increase in pay and suggested that be taken into account for their budget. The VP Admin suggested that our members could talk to their Dean about budget planning since we don't have representation on the committee, so please feel free to let them know what you'd like to see in the budget.
- On Tuesday evening I attended a **DFA event** on their collective agreement and collegial governance. I made a few interesting notes relative to CUPE 3912:
 - Henry Hicks laughed at how Dalhousie full-time faculty were underpaid in the 1970s.
 - Part-time instructors were not included in the DFA so chairs could be because they were the ones who hire instructors.
 - The original collective agreement included an article that 90% of the work had to be done by the DFA, which is why even now only 10% of courses are taught by CUPE 3912 members at Dal whereas about a third are taught by PTers at SMU and the Mount.
- This week's excerpts from the collective agreements is on the maximum number of courses our members can teach, an issue that has come up a few times this past week. See below.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

Collective agreement language on maximum number of courses:

MOUNT

13.8 A member shall not teach more than a total of two units during the Fall and Winter terms and no more than a total of two units during the Summer terms.

SMU

ARTICLE 1 DEFINITIONS

Part-time faculty member – a member of the faculty of Saint Mary’s University employed to teach on a per course contract up to a maximum of 2.0 full credit courses per academic year and/or a maximum of 2.0 full credit courses during summer school.

DAL

14.10 (c) A Part-Time Academic may be appointed to academic work assignment totaling up to fifteen (15) credit hours during the academic year. During the September to April period, the total number of credit hours shall not exceed twelve (12) credit hours, with a maximum of six (6) credit hours in either the Fall or Winter term. During the Summer terms, the total hours shall not exceed twelve (12) credit hours during any academic year.

February 3, 2020

Hello CUPE 3912 members. The most important item in this weekly update of events and activities is VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT for our campaign next week.

- Next week is our campaign! We will have posters up at all universities (thanks for Larissa and Dave for their help). We are planning tables with pamphlets and information all day on M & Th at Dal, T & F at the Mount, W & Th at SMU. We need volunteers! Please contact part.time.liaison.3912@gmail.com if you can help out for any amount of time. No prior experience or knowledge necessary. If you are too busy, please stop by to say hi and pick up a brochure.
- The Dalhousie Black Faculty and Staff Caucus is reaching out to our members who self-identify as black; please see their letter to you.
- Carmel, VP for Dal PT instructors, and I met with Academic Staff Relations at Dalhousie to discuss their new system for job postings. The new system seems to benefit our members but please let us know if you have any concerns.
- This weekend several of us on the bargaining teams participated in a CUPE workshop on understanding your collective agreement and surveying members. We are putting what we learned into action right away by developing a bargaining survey that will be launched next week. We also discussed how most members are not very familiar with their collective agreement (especially when there are 2 or 3 of them). So I am going to start adding excerpts from the collective agreements from all three universities on a different topic each week. During the workshop we discussed office space a lot, so see below for excerpts from the three agreements on office space.

- The faculty including part-time instructors at Mount Allison University in New Brunswick are on strike. If you are interested in joining a flying picket on Feb. 7, please contact me and I'll put you in touch with ANSUT who is organizing transportation.

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

Collective agreement language on office space and related issues:

MOUNT

Article 17: Provision of Facilities

17.4 The employer recognizes that in order to carry out their teaching duties, members require access to appropriate facilities and resources. The Employer shall continue to endeavour to provide the support necessary for members to fulfil these duties. These facilities and resources shall include access to library services and holdings, computer services, telephones, appropriate teaching space, shared office space and furnishings, secretarial and technical assistance.

17.4.1 Shared offices assigned to employees shall be provided and maintained in accordance with Occupational Health and Safety legislation, and shall contain a desk, a chair, and an electric fan where necessary.

SMU

ARTICLE 19 OFFICE SPACE AND FACILITIES

19.01 Recognizing the severe space limitations facing the University, the Employer will endeavour to provide to employees shared office space and access to facilities and services required to fulfil their contractual obligations. The office space will be equipped with standard office equipment to include a desk, a filing cabinet, chairs, a telephone and a computer. Individual computer user, e-mail and voice mail accounts will be made available.

DAL

ARTICLE 18 - OFFICE SPACE & FACILITIES

18.1 The Employer agrees to provide the Employees with the use of space, facilities, services and equipment as determined by the employing department as available for the performance of their duties and responsibilities. Individual member concerns relating to office space should be brought to Labour Management Committee. The Labour Management Committee will address the concerns within a three (3) month period.

18.3 Provision will be made for Employees to receive mail in the department in which they are employed.

18.4 Part-Time Academics who retain precedence shall be entitled to library card privileges and a Dalhousie e-mail account.

January 27, 2020

Hello CUPE 3912 members. This is the 2nd weekly update of events and activities.

- We set the date for our Annual General Meeting as April 3. Time and location tbd. Note that we will have some very minor bylaw amendments. There will also be elections for half of the executive positions and (probably) a vote on our bargaining proposals.
- Our trustees (Julie, Kim, Reddi) are ‘kicking ass’ (quote from Julie) working their way through our backlog of audits. Their work is MUCH appreciated!
- There are still spots in our CUPE bargaining workshop on understanding your collective agreement and surveying our members on Jan. 31 and Feb. 1. Please contact me if you are interested.
- After receiving the email about budget planning at the Mount, Pat (our VP at the Mount) and I have arranged to meet Mustansar (Mount VP Admin) next week. If you have any feedback on the Mount budget document, you can share them with me before our meeting or you can contact any of the Mount budget committee members directly.
- Carmel Forde, VP for Dal PT instructors, was re-appointed to the CUPE Post Secondary Task Force. Congratulations Carmel!
- CUPE National is seeking applications to serve on CUPE’s new regional trial panels to deal with complaints and offences under the CUPE National Constitution. If you are interested, please contact me for more details. The deadline is Feb. 14.
- CAUT is promoting a National Week of Advocacy March 2-6 when it will coordinate meetings between MPs and associations. Collective calls to action to address chronic underfunding will help to make post-secondary education a priority of the current parliament. If you are interested, contact me or register at:
https://registration.caut.ca/index.php?event_id=nwa2020&language=e by Feb. 7, 2020.
- Here’s an interesting US blog from Larissa: <https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/just-visiting/equal-pay-equal-work-calculating-fair-pay-teaching>

Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!

January 20, 2020

Hello CUPE 3912 members. This is a weekly update of events and activities, presented in a format in which I hope you can quickly review what is important for you.

- Howard Donohoe and Nick Deal are our new reps on the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee at SMU and the Joint Committee at the Mount, respectively. Thanks to all those who volunteered!
- On Wednesday, Dave and I joined VP Daryl at the Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture in Truro for a pizza lunch with members followed by a short meeting with the Dean. We met some keen interested members and discussed the re-opening of the Cox building after the fire.
- I participated in the CAUT Forum for Presidents Friday-Saturday in Ottawa. We had panel discussions on bargaining, building solidarity, academic freedom, open/closed searches for senior administrators and accommodating students. Whereas issues like accommodating students are definitely relevant to our members, I am becoming more convinced that we should also be concerned with university governance.

- While in Ottawa I showed drafts of posters for our campaign to a CAUT communications person. She really liked them and has offered to print colour copies for us. Stay tuned!
- CAUT has developed a new tool to reach out to your MP about the importance of a renewed investment in our universities. I tried it out and it's easy to use:
<https://caut.us11.list-manage.com/track/click?u=6f34f95050d01054def96de44&id=8980a2f94c&e=7412f65491>
- We have just set up a CUPE bargaining workshop on understanding your collective agreement and surveying our members on Jan. 31 and Feb. 1. It's for our bargaining teams but we have a few spots if anyone else is interested. Please contact me if you are.
- The Dalhousie Faculty Association is hosting a lecture 7-9 pm on Feb. 4 in Dal SUB McInnes Room by Ray Larkin, who has experience with arbitrations and bargaining, followed by a panel on collegial governance. Please RSVP Kristin.Hoyt@dal.ca

That's a lot for one week! Please contact me for further information on any of these items.

In solidarity,

Karen Harper

President, CUPE 3912

Together, we CAN Make It Fair in Halifax and Truro in 2020!