



UNION OPENING PRESENTATION

In Support Of

Our Bargaining Proposals

For Amending

The

Collective Agreements

For

Unit 1

&

Unit 2

DATED: 30th August, 2010

Class Size & Student Ratio (Trudi)

As many of you are aware, and are likely forced to confront on a daily basis in your roles as College Deans or Department Chairs, budgetary constraints and the proposed solution for dealing with those constraints—integrated planning—have become buzz words at this university. While the Union respects the difficult position you occupy, we also want to draw your attention to some of the negative implications of the restructuring and rationalization processes that are ongoing at U of G. One of our primary concerns is the quality of education we provide to students. We have consistently seen the amount of students we are responsible for increase from semester to semester, year to year. This is damaging to the university's reputation but, more importantly, it is unfair to students who pay high tuition fees for the education they receive.

In the fall of 2009, articles were published on the university's website in the "Campus News" section, congratulating U of G for the rankings it received in the Globe and Mail and MacLean's magazine. These congratulations served to obscure what is really going in the classrooms of this university – our experiences as front-line workers paint a very different picture. If asked by the Globe and Mail, or MacLean's, or the Administration for that matter, our members would give the university a low ranking with respect to its performance. Bigger class sizes and less interaction between students and instructors and students and TAs are one of the primary reasons for this low ranking. Interestingly, in the 2009 Globe and Mail university rankings, students gave U of G a "B" grade in terms of their satisfaction with class size. The average was B+.

GLOBE & MAIL RANKINGS	GUELPH	AVERAGE
Satisfaction with Class Size	B	B+
Average # of Students in 1st year Class	417.0	210.0
%age of All First Year Classes with < 30 Students	5%	9%
%age of All First Year Classes with 30-100 students	16%	39%
%age of All First Year Classes with 100+ Students	79%	52%
%age of All Fourth Year Classes with < 30 Students	19%	29%
%age of All Fourth Year Classes with 30-100 students	52%	59%
%age of All Fourth Year Classes with 100+ Students	29%	13%

The average number of students in 1st year classes is 417 at Guelph, compared to the national average, which is 210 students. Additional figures from the rankings are also telling: for example, as you can see from the table above, the percentage of all first year classes with 30-100 students is 16% at U of G while the average is 39%; the percentage of all first year classes with 100+ students is 79% at U of G while the average is 52%; in fourth year classes with less than 30 students the percentage is 19% at U of G while the average is 29%; Finally, the percentage of all fourth year classes with 100+ students is 29% while the average is 13%.

Given these figures, it appears that the quality of education is lower at U of G in comparison to other Canadian universities. The experiences of our members corroborates this. Each day, as TAs and

Sessionals carry out their work, they face working conditions that impinge on the learning experience of their students. For example, as the number of students that TAs are in charge of increases from year to year, the number of exams, labs, and papers to be graded also increases. That increase means less time that can be devoted to each exam, lab, and/or paper. If we are to have the grading done in the quick turn-arounds that are often expected, then feedback must be minimized. In one particular first-year course, TAs are only given three minutes to grade each of the students' quizzes, and they are often warned by the Lab Supervisor if they take more than 3 minutes. Not only is this problematic for the TAs themselves in terms of being disciplined, but it also creates a poor learning environment for their students. Three minutes is an inadequate amount of time to both grade the quiz and provide the student with feedback. Another example is the tendency for departments to only give out 0.5 TAs in the summer months, even though the TA/student ratios (when compared to the previous semester in which the course was offered) should dictate more than a 0.5 work assignment. The result is that one TA becomes responsible for 120 students or more. This creates both poor working conditions and, by extension, poor learning conditions. Our Sessional members face similar demands and constraints. No one is winning here.

We are sure that the university does not intend to sacrifice the quality of education at U of G. However, the trend at this university seems to be towards cramming as many students into the classroom as possible. This can only produce a poorer learning environment and a lower quality of education. Individual, face-to-face time and one-on-one interaction with students is fast becoming a rarity. TAs and Sessionals are being asked to do the same amount of work as their predecessors but with more students in their charge. It's only logical that the more students there are in a class, the less time there is for everyone to participate in lively class discussions and debates and the less time there is for individual attention from both Sessional faculty and TAs. Given our experiences on the front-line, it becomes very difficult for the university to claim that the integrated planning and restructuring that is taking place is resulting in a more meaningful experience for undergraduate students. There are definite negative impacts on the quality of education being offered – the Union's position is that these impacts can be mitigated by stipulating TA/student and Sessional/student ratios in the Collective Agreement. We hope that you will see the value in including these provisions – if not for the working conditions of our members, then for the learning conditions of your students.

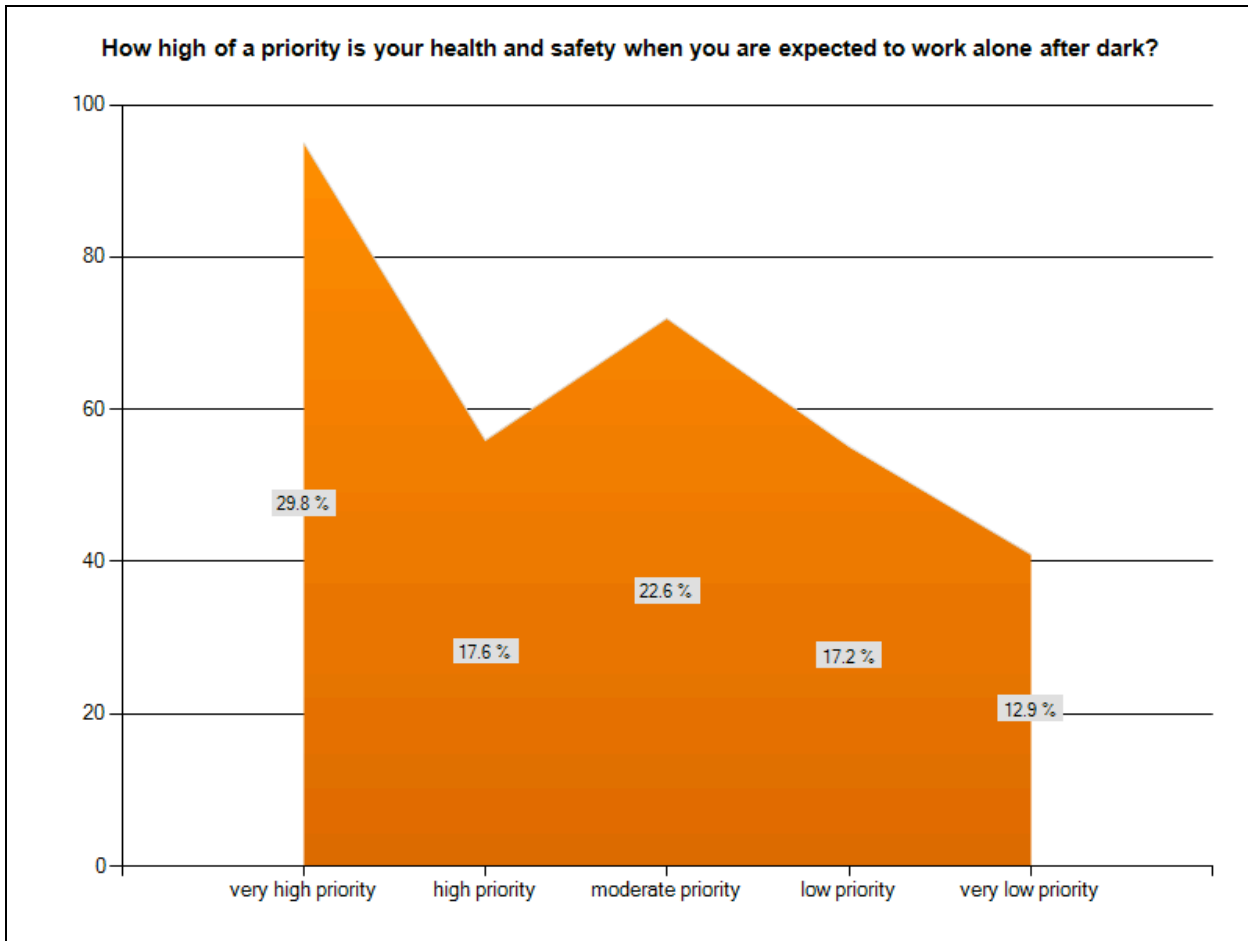
Health and Safety (Chris)

The bargaining process allows us an opportunity to highlight many crucial issues facing our members here at the University of Guelph, but few matters can be classified quite as literally as "life and death" as those relating to health and safety.

As both students and workers, we spend considerable time on campus carrying out strenuous tasks, handling hazardous products, and dealing with others. To properly carry out our duties, we as members need to be assured of our safety while at work, and important in this process is a clear outline of steps to follow in the unfortunate event that an injury does occur. When someone experiences an injury, they can feel shocked, confused, or embarrassed. In the immediate aftermath, they often do not know what to do or where to turn, and as such, they may take the wrong steps and exacerbate the situation. This causes problems for all involved, as it can snowball into a much more

serious issue if not immediately and properly addressed. Providing members with a clear protocol for recourse if injured is a simple way to alleviate this problem and ensure that those few who have the misfortune of getting injured can get the necessary help, and return to their duties as quickly as possible.

But beyond the need for injury protocols is a need for our members to have confidence in the safety of their person when on campus. In our 2010 member survey, over 70% labeled their health and safety when working alone at night to be a priority issue to them.



Particularly for our female members, this kind of protection is absolutely crucial. Gender violence remains a sad reality in Canada, and university campuses are no exception. Reports of sexual assaults on university campuses all across Ontario have not been an uncommon occurrence over the past few years, with a recent incident at York University making headlines. The 2008 annual campus police report at the University of Guelph shows double-digit assaults having been reported here on campus, including multiple instances of sexual assault. We cannot idly stand by while these kinds of incidences happen; the university not only has a moral imperative to ensure that all necessary preventative steps are taken, but also a legal one.

Members deserve the relief of knowing that there is an accessible phone in all campus workspaces. They often spend nights alone in labs, libraries, and offices, and yet in many of these spaces access to

emergency phones is limited and arbitrary. How can members be assured that they are safe doing their work when they cannot easily contact someone if something goes wrong? If nothing else, the assaults that have occurred recently at York, Carleton, and elsewhere illustrate that the threat of assault while on campus is not a minor concern. We've argued the need for better safety measures before, and we've consistently been met with the response along the lines of "if it ain't broke..." In the context of these serious crimes, to continue to wait for more to go wrong is a heinous act.

Research (Dee)

The University of Guelph is an excellent academic institution with a strong commitment to research. It is this commitment that we need to work to improve during this round of negotiations. In not supporting the research activities of Sessional lecturers the university is failing to meet its full potential as a research institution.

Sessional lecturers are often hired not only for our excellent teaching record but also on the strength of our research, yet the university does nothing to acknowledge or facilitate our research activities. We must have the ability to apply as principal researchers for external grants and access to an internal research fund. In addition to funds, research also takes time. The university acknowledges this through sabbaticals for full-time faculty, but only allows two days paid leave for Sessional lecturers who wish to attend conferences. Part time faculty must have provisions that acknowledge and protect our right and desire to conduct research. These provisions must be enshrined in our Collective Agreement. We must see evidence of respect for our worth as researchers and as teachers. The current situation constitutes a grossly unfair practice since it greatly reduces our chances of obtaining tenure-track jobs at this or any other university. Our ability to teach solid, relevant courses to our students is tied to our research activities so ultimately the experience for our undergraduate students is also affected by these unjust practices.

Indeed, Ian Angus reports that as much as 55% of undergraduate teaching in Canada is now being performed by part-time faculty (Ian Angus, *Love the Questions: University Education and the Enlightenment*, Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing). In a similar vein, an article by the University of Guelph's Dr. Harold Bauder reports that the use of part-time or Limited Term academic labour has been increasing in Canada and that it is increasingly the case that recent Ph.D.s will engage in part-time teaching before they obtain tenure, if indeed they obtain tenure at all (2006. *The Segmentization of Academic Labour*. ACME 4(2): 227-238). The increasing reliance on part-time flexible labour is not a temporary measure, the recent reduction in these positions is. So the support and recognition of part-time faculty and the research we do is a crucial issue both for our members and for the university.

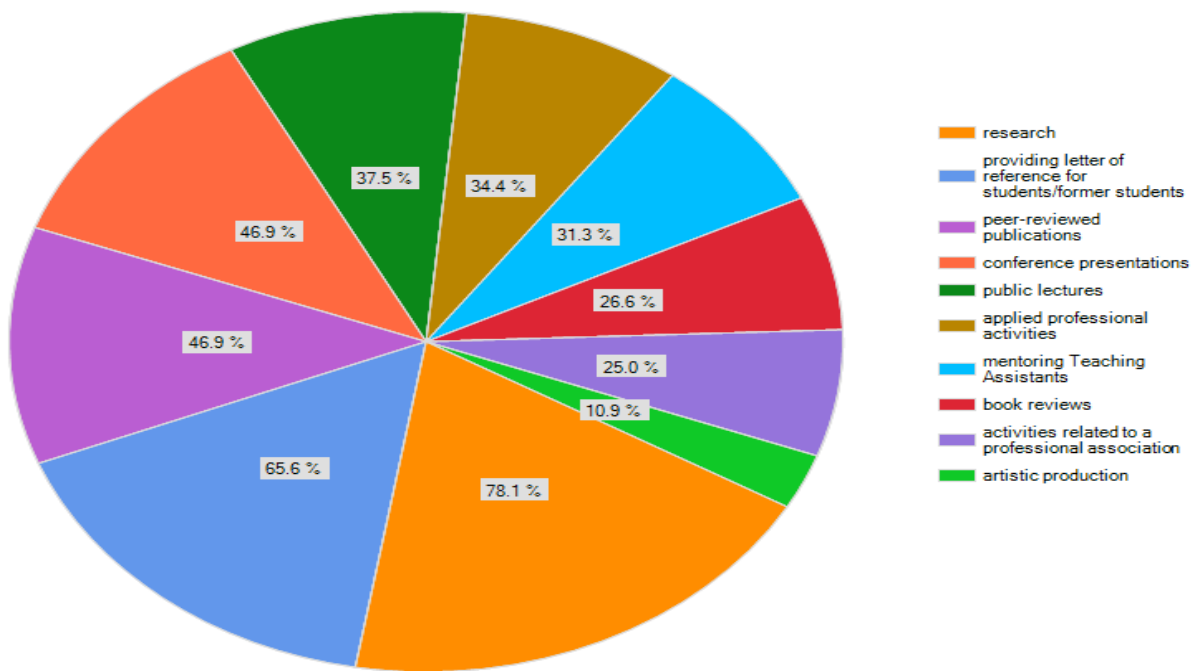
There are several ways that other universities in southern Ontario have addressed these imbalances. Wilfrid Laurier and York University offer research funds, travel funds, and one semester paid leave for research activities for their Sessional lecturers. The University of Toronto has recently made changes to ensure that their Sessional lecturers are eligible to apply for SSHRC grants. Table 1 summarizes relevant items in the collective agreements of nearby universities.

TABLE 1: Provisions for research activities for Sessional Lecturers in Southern Ontario

	Internal Research Fund	Ability to apply as principal investigator	Paid Research Leave	Conference Travel Fund (in addition to PDR)
Univ. of Toronto	NO	YES	NO	YES
York University	YES	YES	YES	YES
Wilfrid Laurier	YES	NO	YES	YES
Univ. of Guelph	NO	NO	NO	NO

Of course, our members are fully committed to our students and do remain current in our respective disciplines. Indeed, our survey indicates that despite the structural barriers we face, close to 50% of our members have peer-reviewed publications and close to 80% have an active research program. In addition many of our members are involved in applied work, work which often goes unrecognized in academic circles but which is of value to our students. People with direct experience in applied activities are able to address those students who are not interested in pursuing an academic career but want to work in a field related to their discipline. Several of us also work with graduate students.

In addition to teaching, which of the following activities have you been involved in over the past 12 months? (check all that apply):



Applying for funding, designing and implementing a successful research project, and then going through the process of peer-review publication helps us to mentor graduate students as they take their own first steps in these activities. Our survey results show that nearly 30% of our members have worked directly with one or more graduate students at this university (CUPE3913 Member Survey 2010). The pie-chart above summarizes the professional activities of our members.

In closing, I would like to refer back to the article by Harald Bauder. Bauder predicts that the tenure system itself is likely to come under attack in the next decade or two. He argues that the use of Part Time academic labour is necessary for the continuation of tenure track appointments given the increasing class sizes and the increasing demands made by Promotion and Tenure committees. So, the

issues I am talking about here today affect Unit II members, graduate and undergraduate students and ultimately tenured faculty as well. The quality of the education that we are able to provide to our students and our ability, as a community, to conduct research – that is our role as producers rather than mere transmitters of knowledge – is what is at stake.

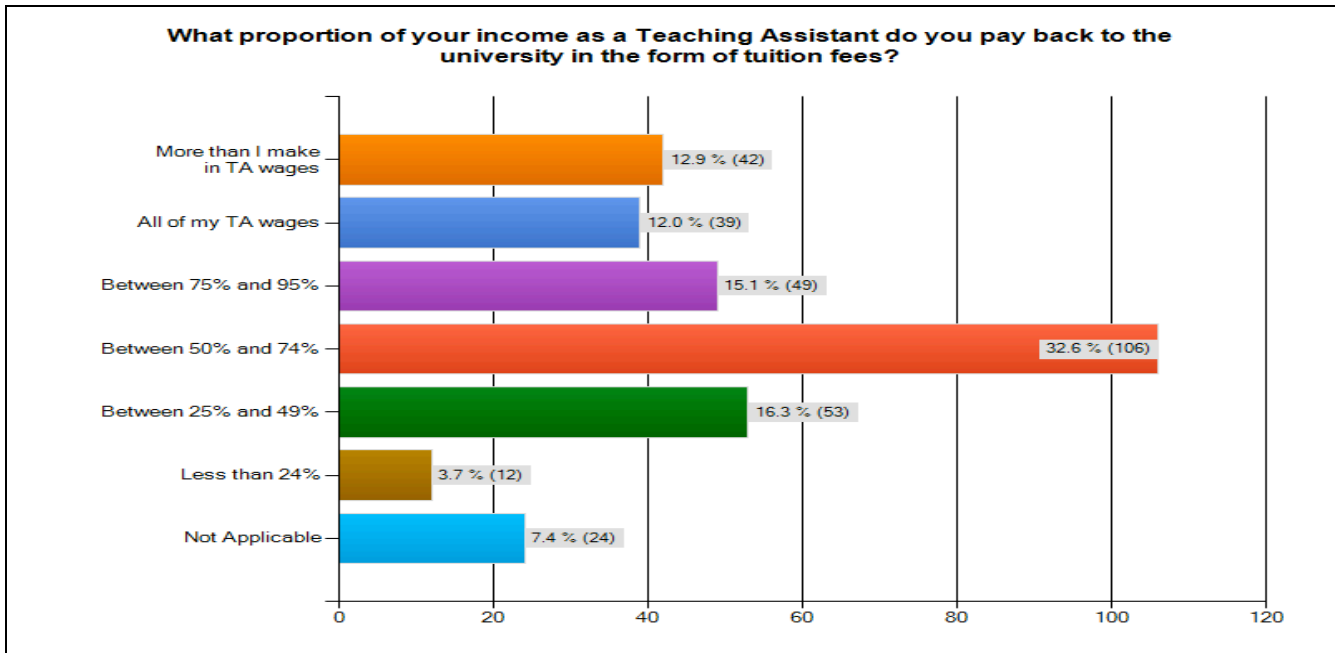
We must have access to the university's Research Ethics Board, survey software, funding and paid research leaves. We must have a policy that guarantees affiliation when required for grant applications. In short, we need recognition that our status as Sessional lecturers in no way reflects a lack of commitment to research or to the academy in general. Indeed as the pie-chart above demonstrates, we are doing a great deal of research and publishing. Imagine what we could do if we had provisions in place to facilitate these activities. Provisions for our research activities must be included in the collective agreement, not subject to the whims of individual departments or colleges. The university's ability to attract and keep qualified and committed Sessional lecturers depends upon it. Given the number of undergraduate students being taught by part-time faculty here, the quality of undergraduate education at the University of Guelph will suffer in the long run if these measures are not taken now. We as a community must take steps to reverse the erosion of academic standards that accompanies corporatization. In the upcoming weeks as we go through the bargaining process, we all have an opportunity to make important changes and we must seize this opportunity now. Thank you.

Tuition Relief (Jaime)

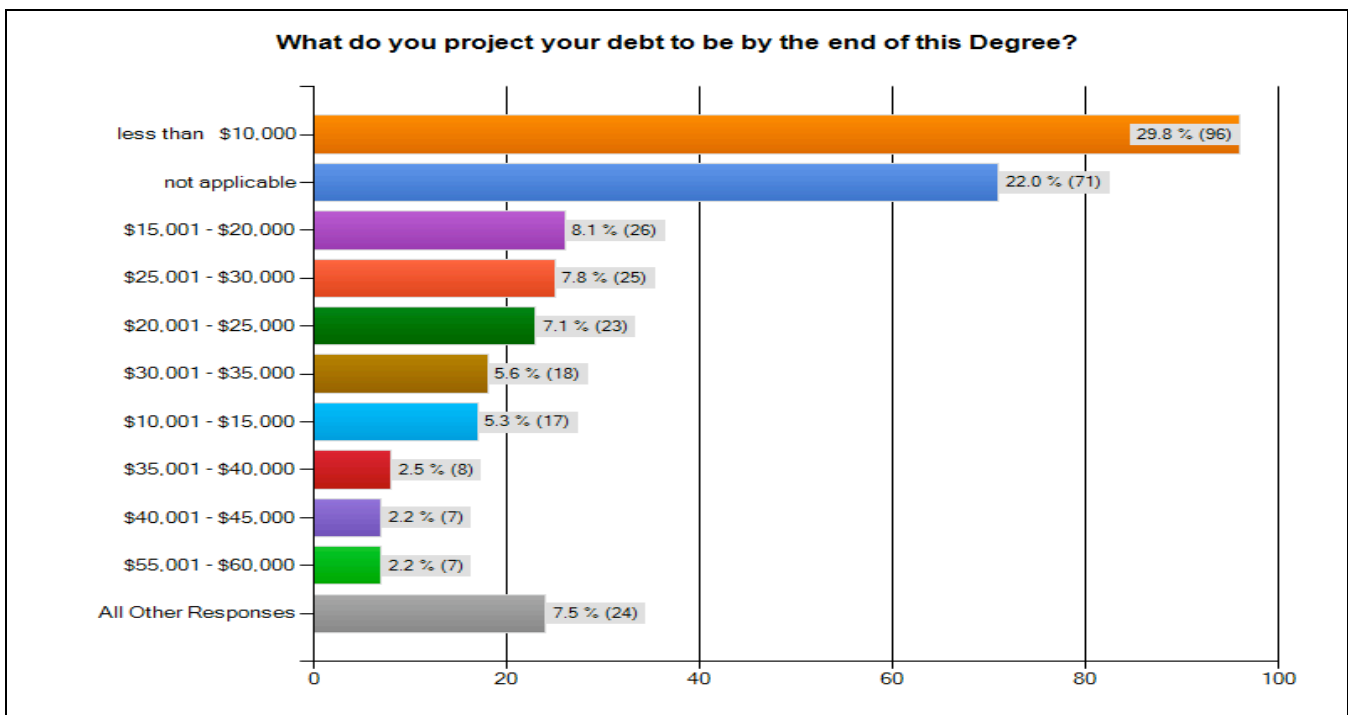
Imagine you have recently been accepted to study fine cuisine in a prestigious restaurant. This restaurant is internationally recognized for the innovative menu it offers and the continuous research to change lives through food. As part of the offer of admission, you have been offered to work as a prep-cook. You are very excited about this opportunity – you will be working along famous chefs and preparing ingenious dishes for the satisfaction of the customers.

The problem arises when you realize that you have to eat the very same food that you help to prepare. You enjoy the food, no questions about that. However, the money that you use to pay for the food is the same money that you get to work as the prep cook. Easy comes, easy goes, as they say – the money that you earn rapidly goes back into the hands of the employer. You are not the only one in such situation. As you investigate the matter, you realize that certain chefs are not considered as such by the restaurant: they are the 'contract cooks'. It is hard to differentiate chefs from the contract cooks, in many ways they do the same work!

The story above is based on the very situation that Teaching Assistants and Sessional Lecturers face every semester: to pay for the product that they have helped to create, that is, education at the University of Guelph. Certainly, in very few cases do you get a paycheque, and then turn around and give it right back to the employer, but that is indeed what our members are forced to do. In the case of Teaching Assistants, over 70% use from 50% of their wages to even more than they make in order to pay back the university in the form of tuition fees.



The issues of wages increases and tuition fees are for the reason quite interconnected for us. Our surveys show that most of the Teaching Assistants on campus survive on a yearly income of less than \$20,000, and a considerable portion under \$10,000. This results in situations of financial difficulties, forcing many to apply for student loans. As a matter of fact, 40% of the Teaching Assistants are expecting to owe over \$20,000 in terms of student loans by the end of their degree – that is, more than what they earn in a year.



Tuition fees have not paused to escalate year by year. And even less for international students. If I may request the use of your imagination one more time, why should international prep-cooks be paying

three times the price for the food they have helped to cook? And don't forget that international students cannot access provincial financial aid, while still being forced to pay discriminatory UHIP premiums not faced by domestic students.

We cannot stress the importance of this issue enough. Our members work tirelessly on the front lines of this institution; we come to work, day in, day out, often evenings and weekends, all the while showing an incredible level of dedication and loyalty to the students we serve, only to have our wages snatched out from underneath us at the beginning of each semester.

The inequity that exists within the university is astonishing. Other workers on campus receive a tuition fee rebate for themselves and their families. Including many of you sitting at this table. What makes our members any different? Our students don't see a difference and other workers don't see a difference.

We assert that there is no difference, and we firmly believe that our members deserve the same benefit as any other worker on this campus. We deserve a tuition rebate for ourselves and our families. We should not be paying an exaggerated price for the pie we have helped to bake.

Sick Leave (Erinn)

Today, I want to talk about the problem of Presenteeism.

We all know what absenteeism looks like - when workers do not report to work when they are scheduled to be there.

But presenteeism is a problem that affects workplaces like ours, too. People in our bargaining units who are sick, often still come to work. Sometimes this is because they fear the repercussions of taking time off, or they do not know how to find a substitute for themselves.

A study by Statistics Canada shows that job permanency and reduced fear of reprisal influence how often workers who are sick use their sick leave.

In recent years the U of G campus has been affected by the Norwalk virus. We've also worried about pandemics like H1N1 spreading through classroom complexes and residences.

A culture of presenteeism can lead sick workers to come to work, because they fear being singled out or penalized for using that time.

In addition to adjusting Collective Agreement language around sick leaves, the attitude around leaves needs to change.

Flexible time that accommodates illness or other personal needs is becoming increasingly important to workers, and to management who seek to recruit top people.

Even *HRVoice* reported that fifty-five percent of 18- to 34-year-olds identify the freedom to take extended leaves or sabbaticals as a key workplace benefit.

Dee has already spoken to Research leave earlier in this presentation.

Today I also want to speak about Maternity and Parental Leave - an issue that's increasingly important, especially as the number of women in graduate programs rises. As some members of your team will know, this is an issue that's become more significant in recent years.

A study by Statistics Canada has shown that highly educated mothers suffer a larger earnings gap than their counterparts with less formal education, when they are compared to similarly educated childless women.

This is why it's important to address this issue at this level. For many members of both of our units, they are at the beginning of their careers - to lose time, experience, income or privileges at this level causes wage and career gaps from which many women never recover.

On the flip side of this, there are women who are disadvantaged because they simply cannot afford to take the time off to spend with their newborn or newly adopted children. One recent Statistics Canada survey found that finances prevented more than 40 percent of new mothers from taking maternity leave. Of those mothers who did take maternity leave, more than 80 percent said that if they could have afforded it, they would have remained off of work for a longer period of time.

This is because limited leave and income replacement are not enough to support new parents. Employees are often hesitant to access these types of leaves if they feel it will affect their jobs, or their limited income.

That's why we need to improve the language that surrounds sick leave, as well as maternity and parental leave - in order to provide a level playing field for the kind of dedicated employees U of G is working to attract.

Meeting with Union (Denise)

As it currently stands, when an employee is to be disciplined, the Union's copy of any written disciplinary action is to be provided to the Union at the meeting. It is easy to see how this is insufficient notice for the Union representative to be adequately prepared to represent the member being charged with the disciplinary action, and adequately remedy the situation. If management is attending the meeting completely aware with the intent of the meeting, it would only seem fair that the Union is provided with sufficient notice and information on the proposed disciplinary action and the context of the dispute.

Intellectual Property Rights (KeteH)

Intellectual Property is owned by the person who creates it. TAs and Sessional Instructors have a right to the Intellectual Property they create and generate.

In essence, when our members create study guides, laboratory manuals, websites, course work delivered online, including distance education courses, multimedia instructional packages, tests and work papers, lectures, and other originally generated pieces of intellectual.

Protections must be put in place to safeguard the use and access to these pieces of original and often innovative material. The quality of education at this university can only be improved and upheld if there are provisions that guarantee the rights of our members to the work they produce.

Fair Wage (Stacey)

The University of Guelph has built its reputation thoughtfully and gradually over the years, an effort that is best summarized by the slogan "*changing lives, improving life.*" Enormous resources are dedicated to marketing this reputation, including everything from a dedicated and diligent communications staff to pricey one-off ads in the National Post. It is therefore imperative that the university begins reflecting this philosophy in its treatment of its workers, lest the words of our slogan ring hollow. This institution must hold itself accountable to the values it purports to treasure, and it is time to extend these values to the gatekeepers to students' educations.

A fair and livable wage for the enormous amount of work these individuals do is not only what is needed to fall in line with our stated values, but what is necessary for workers' wellbeing. Freezing wages in an unstable economic environment is extremely problematic as the viability of this institution—financial and otherwise—rests on its previously discussed reputation of academic excellence. I'm sure all around this table can attest to the rigors of balancing one's education, work and personal lives; add to this mix financial hardship and the stress of this balance becomes overwhelming. Teaching Assistants and Sessional faculty are our frontlines in the educational experience and are often students' first resource. Why would the university not do its utmost to support and ensure a good working experience for TAs and Sessional faculty? Workers under CUPE 3913 have already foregone close to a half a million dollars in wage and benefit increases due them and in this economic climate, a public institution in existence to better the public good, ought to be part of the solution, not the problem.

To conclude, wage is not the only component of this support, but it is perhaps one of the most important. Workers must be fairly compensated for ALL the work they do in order to make that work as accessible and available as possible.

The Union's position is that we have already "given at the office". When the university was crying poor, this Union listened. It is now time for the university to listen - a fair wage increase is now due and overdue.

Union Service (Chris)

Like any Union Local, our executive is made up of our members – we are dedicated Sessional instructors, TAs and students who give our time in order to ensure that both ourselves and our peers feel protected and respected when at work. But this is not our job; rather, we are individuals who also have classes to teach, papers to mark, and research to do. Much of what we earn in our jobs is eaten up in the form of its associated costs, ranging from travel expenses to tuition, and our surveys have consistently shown that our members struggle financially.

Reimbursing members for Union service is a common practice, and indeed other Locals here at the University of Guelph have members released from their job to fulfill their executive duties at full pay. The university rarely fails to compare us to these other Locals when given the opportunity, and yet none of our members who serve on the executive have this basic provision. All of us must balance time in the Union with the responsibilities of being instructors and students.

Those of us who serve in the Union are not just ensuring the protection of worker's rights on campus. We are active in our community, building links with those around us and helping to fight for issues of social justice, anti-discrimination, and equality. This is the kind of engagement that the University of Guelph sees itself as promoting. Indeed, on countless occasions the president of this university has noted the importance of community engagement as responsible citizenship, stating that it is imperative for those on campus to recognize “our responsibilities in helping our friends, colleagues and community members who are in need” and the general need to “become involved in our Local community and the global community beyond.” Our executive positions are filled with the kind of individuals that the university itself claims to want to foster. So why does the university make it so hard to participate?

Transparency in Hiring (Denise)

While through the Collective Agreement an applicant may grieve a hiring decision made, this process is not made explicitly clear by the respective departments and potential employees are often left unaware of their rights as potential members of the Union.

We believe that the hiring process should become more transparent in order to guarantee fairness and that every department should be made accountable to all applicants that wish to review the process through which they were or were not hired. We believe that this process cannot be expedited and that every applicant has the right to review his or her records and/or documentation that were used as basis for the hiring. Grievances are very time-consuming and the entire process may be fairly resolved at this early stage rather than have to wait for the arbitration stage of the grievance.

The lack of transparency within the hiring process is a significant problem with 93% of surveyed members giving moderate to very high priority to the need of transparency within hiring. Comments

left on the survey show how members are growing increasingly disenfranchised. Here's a sample of what members have to say:

'In some departments the hiring procedure is very unfair. The TA distribution is not based on the experience but based on the relationship with the department or other issues. It was a really bad decision for the students.'

'I have heard through the grapevine that some jobs posted on the CUPE are 'ghost jobs' meaning that they do not actually exist and that departments post 'ghost' positions because they have to. If this is true, than this should stop. What is the point of this? What is the point of having student fill out numerous applications and hand out numerous CVs if the jobs don't actually exist?'

'I want to know why I didn't get a job; I want to know why someone else gets a job over me'

'Sometimes it seems very questionable how they give them out, do not understand it'.

'I seriously loathe the lack of transparency in the hiring process!'

Job Definitions/Descriptions (Jaime)

What is 'to assist'? What does it mean 'to teach'? What does it entail to be a 'teaching assistant'? These seem as questions easy to answer. However, more and more Teaching Assistants are being forced to teach, to lecture, to 'instruct'. The Teaching Assistants are now becoming the teachers, the lecturers, or as certain departments are now calling them: the 'instructors'. It is not clear yet whether this is due to a confusion regarding the designation 'assistant', or because the university has not yet agreed to define the role and duties that a Teaching Assistant is supposed to fulfill. This must be included in the Collective Agreement.

Certainly, it is not a question of TAs being promoted to gain the experience of teaching. No. It is a situation in which a worker is expected to fulfill more responsibilities and duties than his/her peers, and for less money. If it were a matter of promotion, we should expect Sessional Lecturers being hired for tenure-track faculty positions. No. TAs are filling the jobs of the Sessionals, and the Sessionals are being terminated. Coincidence or not, as departments have endeavoured to regard TAs as teachers more Sessionals have been laid off than in previous years.

"Divide and conquer," the university seems to be saying. Wrongly, I should add. To place TAs in confrontation with Sessionals for job opportunities is not going to yield the response that departments in the arts and sciences may be expecting. Put differently, as we come to the table to negotiate a new Collective Agreement, we raise this issue in order to establish job definitions that would make sure that our members are to perform the work for which they have been hired.

I am optimistic – I prefer to think that everything has been a mistake, and the university in conjunction with our Union will correct the severe confusion running around campus. I ask the people at this table to help recover the faith of our members in the institution of reasoning and centre of logic, the university.

Hybrid Courses (Dee)

The corporatization of the academy, reflected by the increased use of part-time, temporary or “flexible” workers is also reflected in increases in class size and the increasing use of new technologies such as ScanTron and Desire to Learn. The recent introduction of hybrid courses at the university of Guelph-Humber might also be a sign of this trend. While we in no way acknowledge that any additional training is needed to teach these courses, we must protect our members. Thus, we must see provisions that ensure Sessional lecturers and Teaching Assistants will be provided with any training or upgrading required to teach this “new” type of course. Any and all such training or upgrading must be provided to all of our members at no cost and we must be compensated for our time. Anything less jeopardizes not only the letter and spirit of seniority in both Units, but also the intent behind and foundation on which the Right of First Refusal is based.

Overtime pay (Chris)

As the ratio of students to both instructors and TAs at the University of Guelph has consistently increased over the past five years, so too have their respective workloads. It's elementary math that as these numbers continue to increase, the amount of time that TAs and Sessionals can spend per student decreases. To maintain the particular quality of education that this university prides itself on, TAs and Sessionals must put in extra hours to ensure that students get the attention and feedback required for more than just surface learning.

But putting in extra hours isn't a neutral act for our members. All of our Unit 1 members are students, as are a significant portion of those in Unit 2, with the need to partake in coursework, research, and writing beyond their employment. In fact, their continued employment is often conditional upon these very activities. Furthermore, over 60% of our unit 2 members and 15% of those in unit 1 are responsible for supporting one or more dependents. These serve as just a small example of the many obligations and responsibilities that our members have outside of their jobs. Having to put in extra work is thus not a simple proposition of getting paid the same for more hours of work. Our members have finite amounts of time, and as such, overtime work necessarily eats into that which was previously allotted to critical non-work activities. Members must be reimbursed at a rate that takes into account the imposition on their personal lives, and we thus propose a double rate for overtime to take effect after 15 hours/week.

What might be the alternative to this? TAs and Sessionals deem the current overtime structure not worth it, and instead choose to mark assignments without in-depth feedback. Multiple choice is chosen over short answer on exams. Office hours are reduced. All of this leads to a slow and steady decline in the educational standards of this institution. And noting the countless studies that link overwork and high levels of stress to ill-health, mental illness, and decreased productivity, the university will pay for this issue one way or another.

Therefore, establishing a compensation framework that reflects the true cost of working overtime for our members must be adopted. A double rate for work over 15 hours per week is absolutely vital to ensuring the quality of education on this campus, and concomitantly, the well-being of the TAs and Sessionals who help keep this university running.

Benefits (Denise)

A healthy, financially-stable member, is a happy, valuable employee. It is truly saddening to see that many members are being forced to go above and beyond their benefits line in order to maintain a healthy body.

72.2% of surveyed members from Unit 1 gave improving Vision Care provisions moderate to very high priority. Over 60% of Unit 1 surveyed members have to go beyond the yearly maximum allotted for vision care, with over 10% of those members having to pay over \$400 on top of the amount they receive for vision care. The Union's position is that members of Unit 1 have sufficient accumulated debt, to have to worry about paying for Vision Care. We believe that members' eye care is essential to their work and that it is clear that the current amount allocated to vision care is insufficient.

Meanwhile, 67.5% of surveyed members have to go beyond the yearly maximum allotted for health care, with 20% of those members spending over \$500 on top of their health care plan. This is an obscene amount of members that are not being adequately covered by both their student plans, or their plans as employees. It is outrageous that on top of the accumulated debt that is bestowed on students for the mere reason of being students, members are also forced to accumulate debt to be able to maintain their health.

Furthermore, dental benefits are essential to any worker in Ontario, as it is not covered through any public means. As students, most members have some sort of plan, however, 81.2% of surveyed members gave negotiating for Dental benefit provisions moderate to very high priority and 79.9% of surveyed members gave moderate to very high priority to their employer paying the dental insurance premiums. 75% of unit 2 surveyed members gave dental very high priority at this round of negotiations. We see these numbers as a clear sign that the plans that members have been able to access are not enough to maintain the basic oral health they deserve.

Office Space and Facilities (Jaime)

Today I will also be speaking to the matter of Office Space and Facilities.

Our members deserve increased access to office space and working computers to carry out their duties.

Some of our members have remarked that sharing a departmental computer with another colleague is not sufficient to effectively carry out the duties of their work assignments.

Essentially, sharing a computer is not adequate.

Because our members use their personal computers for work activities, issues about confidentiality with student information presents ethical concerns. Currently, there are safe-guards for study materials lost or if student information is misplaced.

Additionally, we should not have to pay for office space as some departments currently require, in order perform our work assignments. An example of where this is happening is in the Ontario Agricultural College, specifically in the Environmental Design and Rural Development department, where our members are forced to pay a deposit to get a key in order to have access to office space in the basement of Johnston Hall.

This situation must be rectified so that we are able to effectively and efficiently, perform our duties and maintain the quality of education at this university.

ITA/UHIP reimbursement (Keteh)

So I'm sure I don't have to tell you that our members who are international students have seen an increase in tuition fees of more than 70% in the last four years. Different student fees for domestic and international students place an unfair financial burden on the international student. Already on average, international students pay about \$10,293 per year than their domestic counterparts.

This places a monumental burden on our international members. For example, if an International student has a full TAsip, he or she must forego their entire wages and also pay an additional \$2127 for the outstanding balance of tuition fees, compulsory fees, and UHIP.

And that's if they have no dependants.

If they have dependants, that outstanding balance is even higher. The amount goes up by \$1300 per dependant if you include expenses like UHIP, eye glasses, sundry expenses, sales tax, and necessary miscellaneous fees.

It has always been the Union's position that there is no fundamental difference between domestic and international students when it comes to the value of what they receive. We are contributing to the reputation of this university; we all pay for living expenses such as room & board, transportation, books & supplies, and the sundry expenses which we cannot avoid.

The burden of UHIP premiums is discriminatory and unjust.

This university needs to lead the charge in demanding the eradication of UHIP and take a stand to once again include International TAs in OHIP.

No Discrimination (Stacey)

Protection from discrimination based on mode of dress, body type and appearance is an important component in the maintenance of a safer workplace. It is an easy right to extend on the part of the university, and an invaluable one for workers of size, gender non-conforming workers, workers with disabilities, the list goes on. The mainstream media presents a narrow view of not only beautiful, but also what is strong and capable. People of size, people with disabilities and others face vicious stereotypes that can greatly impact their chances of employment. As a place of ideas, innovation and critical thinking, the university has the chance to put safeguards in place to ensure that workers of size, as well as workers who would otherwise be discriminated against for their appearance or mode of dress, will not face discrimination based on these factors. It is the position of the Union that the Collective Agreement must enshrine protections against discrimination on the bases of appearance, mode of dress and body type.

Lay Off & Severance (Trudi)

We are here today to speak about an issue that has severely impacted our Sessional members in the past year – job cuts. Because of the precarious nature of Sessional work, Unit 2 members are particularly vulnerable to underemployment and layoffs. As many of you recall, the summer of 2009 was a very difficult one for Sessional instructors. Close to 100 appointments were cut, leaving many Sessionals with fewer, if any, courses to teach. Some Sessionals even lost their jobs because the university found it more cost-effective to employ TAs to do their work. Whatever the reasons for these layoffs, what was not lost on our members was the effects on their livelihood. Many Sessionals are forced to teach multiple courses at different universities in order to make ends meet – meeting these ends became extremely difficult for them last summer, fall, and this past winter.

While the university has stated for several years that Sessional faculty are an expendable “stop-gap” measure designed to deal with the lack of tenured, full-time professors, the reality of the situation is actually quite the opposite. During the “Save Sessional Jobs” campaign this past year, and during the meetings we had with the university under our rights according to 4.04 (a) of the Collective Agreement, it became apparent that many Sessional faculty are long-standing members of the university community and have taught courses here at U of G for a number of years – some as many as 25 years. According to information provided to us by the university, Sessionals carry a large teaching workload in many Colleges. For example, in CSAHS, Sessionals held the Right of First Refusal on 73 out of 97 (75% of) courses in Fall 2009 and Winter 2010. In COA, Sessionals held Right of First Refusal on 87 out of 114 (76% of) courses. The insult of being called a stop-gap measure notwithstanding, Sessionals carry the bulk of the teaching load at this university.

If the University, and you as its representatives and spokespersons, do in fact believe that Sessional faculty are “valued and integral to the university’s teaching mission”, as was agreed to in the last round of negotiations, then the treatment they receive from this institution should, and needs, to reflect that. If Sessionals are so valuable and integral, then layoffs are not the type of treatment they should be shown. Given that our Unit 2 members are crucial to providing quality education to both undergraduate and graduate students, as all of you are well aware, provisions should exist in the

Collective Agreement for, first and foremost, protecting them from the indiscriminate layoffs they experienced this past academic year. And if, in the extreme case that layoffs are made, protections must be put in place in terms of a layoff protocol and severance pay. Sessional work is our members' livelihood. It should not be something that can be taken away at the university's whim and with no consultation with the Union.

Sessional work is also our, and your students' education. If the university wants to maintain a high quality of education, cutting courses and course sections is not the way to do it. By having those courses available to students, as well as by maintaining low instructor/student ratios, your College and your Departments are ensuring that quality remains high. The erosion of Sessional jobs is sure to produce one very unfortunate and unnecessary result: the decline of the academic and educational experience for students at the University of Guelph. It is our hope that you will help us ensure that U of G maintains its reputation as a high-quality educational institution. We also hope that you will help safeguard the livelihoods of your colleagues – those who share the responsibility of educating students with you, whose offices are next to yours, who share the passion for teaching and research that you do, and who strive to make the learning experience at this university the best it can be.