

Another Hot Winter of Post-secondary Labour Unrest

We saw an unprecedented number of strikes across university campuses in 2021-2022, and that trend has continued to the current academic year. Below you can find a quick update on another hot year of labour relations for our sector in crisis.

Faculty at l'Université Laval, members of Syndicat des professeurs et professeures de l'Université Laval (SPUL), are the latest to join the fold. Kicking off their strike action last week, the 1,300 members of SPUL have taken to the picket lines to address workload, wages, academic freedom, and collegial governance.

This latest strike follows a series of strikes in Atlantic Canada. Members of MUNFA (Memorial University of Newfoundland Faculty Association) took to the picket lines earlier this winter to improve working conditions for all members and particularly contract faculty, post-retirement benefits, collegial governance, and wages. They were able to win an improved agreement, and returned to the classroom in time for Valentine's Day.

The Cape Breton University Faculty Association (CBUFA) also took strike action this semester to fight back against concessions to job security and for a pay increase which would match what senior administrators gave themselves. Their strike lasted one week, and they were able to fight off concessions and move closer towards equitable wages.

These strikes followed a longer and bitter strike at Dalhousie University last fall by Part-time Academics, Teaching Assistants and Marker/Demonstrator members of CUPE 3912. Their strike action resulted in substantial base wage growths of 23.3% for Part-Time Academics, 23.1% for Teaching Assistants, and 44.5% for Marker/Demonstrators.

Closer to home, 2,800 Teaching Assistant and Research Assistants (in lieu) at McMaster University, members of CUPE 3906 unit 1, went on strike in November for wage increases, extended guarantees, tuition reimbursements, and to close the pay gap between undergrad and graduate Teaching Assistants. After three weeks on the picket lines, CUPE 3906 reached an agreement that saw an immediate wage increase of 5.7% for members holding a degree, and 7.3% for undergrad members. By the end of the five-year collective agreement, members with a degree will see an increase of 14%, and undergrad members will see an increase of nearly 22%.

OCADFA congratulates the members of CUPE 3906, CUPE 3912, CBUFA and MUNFA for their successful labour actions, and we extend our solidarity to SPUL for their ongoing strike. **There is power in a union!**

Graeme Reniers, Executive Director

In This Issue:

- **OCADFA Meeting Calendar**
- **News from the Sector**
- **Upcoming Events & Deadlines**
- **Study Participants Needed**
- **Bill 124 Update**
- **2020-2023 MOA**
- **Bill 124 Reopener**

Meeting Calendar

Membership Meetings

- March 15, 10am - Noon

Board Meetings

- March 2, 10am - 1130am
- March 30, 10am - 11:30am
- April 27, 10am - 11:30am

Grievance Committee

- March 1, 11am - Noon
- March 29, 11am - Noon
- April 26, 11am - Noon

CALL FOR ACTION: #SessionalsCount

We encourage all members to add their name to the growing list of voices demanding meaningful job security that recognizes the long-term contributions many Sessionals make to OCAD University.

Take Action Here: [Sessionals Count Petition](#)

Upcoming Events and Deadlines

I hope you had a restful and productive Winter Study Week. A few friendly reminders regarding upcoming events and opportunities...

Wednesday March 8th - Sessional Drop-in

Our next hybrid SESSIONAL DROP-IN is scheduled Wednesday March 8th, 2023 from 3:30pm to 5:00pm. This drop-in is hosted by Cliff Caines (VP, OCADFA) and June Pak (Sessional Representative, Negotiations Committee, OCADFA).

Our topic for this drop-in is SESSIONAL BARRIERS. We want to hear from you. We want to brainstorm active solutions. From lack of office space to meet with students to workload overload, big and small, past and present, what barriers have you experienced in your teaching work at OCADU?

Join us for refreshments and meet other Sessional Faculty in the new Faculty Lounge (MCA 258), or online via Microsoft Teams!

Wednesday March 15th - PD Fund Deadline

ICYMI, the OCAD University Professional Development (PD) Opportunity Fund Winter 2023 is now open to Sessional Faculty. Sessional Faculty are eligible for up to \$1000.

Applications must be submitted to the Office of the Vice-President, Academic & Provost (via email: vpap@ocadu.ca) no later than March 15, 2023. [Find the form and guidelines here.](#)

Cliff Caines, Vice-President



Precarity and information marginalization: Exploring how academic casualization complicates workplace information practices

You are invited to take part in a research study that explores the experiences of contract academic staff – academics and researchers who work in higher education on short-term contracts (also known as adjunct faculty, contingent faculty, casual academics, sessionals, etc.). While contracts vary, we want to speak to those who work primarily in higher education and work on short-term contracts. In particular, this research is interested in if and how the casualization of academic work influences the professional (and personal) lives of contract academic staff. We are also interested in the influence of casualization on how academic work is carried out, as well as the ways universities provide information to and communicate with contract academic staff. Finally, we are interested in the ways in which contract academic staff are being supported (or not) and ways universities and research communities could provide support.

[More information and consent form here.](#)



Topic: Sessional Barriers
Wednesday March 8th, 3:30pm-5pm
Faculty Lounge, MCA 258
and Online via MS Teams

SESSIONAL DROP-IN



Thank You!

To everyone who participated in OCUFA's Social Media Day of Action on February 28th!

General Monthly Meeting

All members are invited to OCADFA's next General Monthly Meeting on Wednesday March 15, from 10:00 a.m. – Noon

We'll have two themes for this month's meeting:

1. Memorandum of Agreement – FAQs/Ask-me-anything!

With our 2020-2023 MOA freshly available, we thought this would be a good time to invite members to ask anything and everything they want to know about the MOA.

Then, if we have time, we'll move to our second theme:

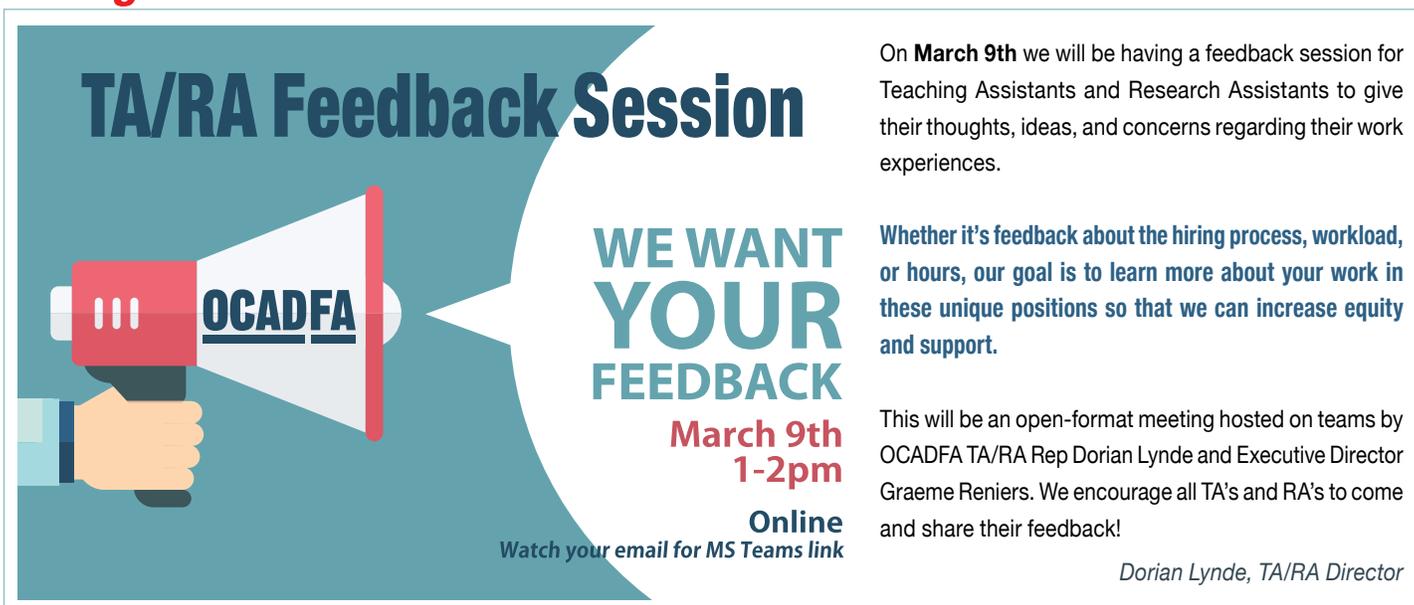
2. What do we need to do our job properly?

What is the University lacking that would help you do your jobs properly?

Is there anything OCADFA should be advocating for, outside of what's already on our radar?

Following our membership meeting, there will be an in-person social in the faculty lounge (MCA 258) from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Calling all TAs & RAs!



The graphic features a hand holding a megaphone with 'OCADFA' written on it. To the right, a speech bubble contains the text 'WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK' in large blue letters, followed by 'March 9th 1-2pm' in red and 'Online' in blue. Below this, it says 'Watch your email for MS Teams link'.

On **March 9th** we will be having a feedback session for Teaching Assistants and Research Assistants to give their thoughts, ideas, and concerns regarding their work experiences.

Whether it's feedback about the hiring process, workload, or hours, our goal is to learn more about your work in these unique positions so that we can increase equity and support.

This will be an open-format meeting hosted on teams by OCADFA TA/RA Rep Dorian Lynde and Executive Director Graeme Reniers. We encourage all TA's and RA's to come and share their feedback!

Dorian Lynde, TA/RA Director

Overtured **Bill 124** Update

We are now meeting with the employer on the outstanding items that were proscribed by Bill 124. As I mentioned in the last update, Bill 124 has been overturned by the Ontario Superior Court. The government appealed that ruling but did not seek a stay. This means the Bill is not enforced while the appeal goes forward, and we are negotiating the reopener with the employer. **OCADFA is seeking: an inflationary wage increase, removal of the separate contract pay scales, and removing the bottom steps with additions to the top of the scales.** All of these are issues were unable to be addressed in the normal course of bargaining due to the constraints of Bill 124.

We are dealing with these items separately from the new round of negotiations and we intend to have them wrapped up well before the end of the academic year.

Eric Steenbergen, Past Negotiations Chair

stay up to date

Follow OCADFA on Social Media



Miss an update?

Navigate to our [Linktree](#) in our Social Media bios or find all dispatches and bulletins on the [OCADFA website](#)



2020-2023 Memorandum of Agreement

You can find the MOA attached to this email, as well as on our website, under the [Documents section](#).

After substantial work and delay, the 2020-2023 Memorandum of Agreement is available.

A big thanks to all members for their support during the negotiating process, and especially to all those who served on the OCADFA Negotiations Committee (Eric Steenbergen, Min Sook Lee, Danyil Panasyev, Charles Reeve, Bill Leeming, Tanner Serson, Annie Tung, and Mary Eileen Wennekers). Thanks also go to our Executive Director Graeme Reniers, and our lawyers from Goldblatt (Steven Barrett, Chris Donovan, and Emily Denomme) who supported us through the mediation and arbitration process.

To be clear, this new signed off MOA does not impact our Bill 124 Reopener. As detailed below in this newsletter, OCADFA is still actively attempting to renegotiate compensation in good faith, and should our efforts not prove successful Arbitrator Kaplan, who awarded the settlement for the 2020-2023 MOA, remains seized (or available) to arbitrate or mediate any impasse.

Bill 124 Reopener – What are other university’s doing?

OCADFA has met with the administration and tabled our compensation proposals in utilization of our Bill 124 Reopener. While we are still in the early days of employers and unions trying to navigate the post-Bill 124 terrain, there has been some movement at other University’s that we can look to.

Two university’s whose employees were in the midst of their Bill 124 “three-year moderation period” of capping compensation increases to 1% annually, have now agreed to surpass that constraint. At Trent University, TUFA and the administration has agreed to cut that moderation period short, and their members saw across-the-board increases beyond 1% on January 1, 2023. At Wilfred Laurier University, WLUFA members have been paid a lump sum adjustment that would have otherwise contravened Bill 124.

At least two other university administrations have agreed to out-right bypass what would have been the “three-year moderation period” for their employees, and have agreed to compensation packages that far surpass 1%. The administration of the University of Toronto has agreed to pay across-the-board increases totalling 11% over the next three years to sessional faculty members of CUPE 3902 unit 3. At Queen’s University, the administration has agreed to across-the-board increases totally 9.5% over the next three years to members of QUFA, as well as increases to the stipends paid to department heads and Professional Expense Reimbursements.

The government may have appealed the court’s ruling to strike down Bill 124, but the simple fact remains that it is no longer in force. Administrations for at least four other universities have recognized this fact, and have agreed to no longer abide by a punitive and regressive law that has since been found to be unconstitutional. **OCADU’s administration needs to value the University’s employees in the same way, and negotiate a fair compensation package for its faculty and academic staff.**

Graeme Reniers, Executive Director

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For Negotiations and Grievance Committee Members, please refer to our website: [About Us](#)