

CUPEU

Concordia University
Professional Employees' Union

Newsletter

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They're Back!! CUPEU's Mobilization Team Reunites

By Dale Robinson, VP Communications

The team who created the "We're the Pros" mobilization campaign and who was strategic in facilitating the successful signing of CUPEU's last collective agreement is back! Like Ocean's 13, CUPEU's mobilization team met up again this past week to discuss strategies to support CUPEU in two upcoming events: 1) the depositing of our C.A. this coming winter and related to this, 2) the General Assembly on Nov.29th when our Negotiations platform will be discussed.

Headed by Anna Barrafato, CUPEU's mobilization team consists of: Chris Alleyne, Owen Moran, Dale Robinson, and Francine Salinitri. The group is happy to welcome Frank Carriere, the new VP Special Projects, to its folds this time 'round. Look in your mail boxes this week for your invitation, made by the Mobilization Team, to **CUPEU's General Assembly, Nov.29th.**

Involve the Union early:

It's good strategy!

By Christine Daviault, VP Grievance

When you have a disagreement with the University or simply a question that goes unanswered, make sure you involve the Union early.

The Union has 30 working days following an incident to file a grievance. Sometimes, it can take months of exchanges with the University before you receive a definitive response. During this time, the Labour Relations Committee could offer you support and, more importantly, ensure that the "30 days" delay ruling would be suspended to allow time for a resolution. Then, should you decide after a lengthy exchange, to file a formal grievance, the University could not argue that you were outside the allowable 30 day time frame.

To get more information, call the CUPEU Office at (514) 848-2424 ext 8603.

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CUPEU Professional Development Fund. Report for 2007-2008 Budget year.

By P. Charles Brown, Chair CPDF Committee

Increasingly, CUPEU members are taking advantage of CUPEU's Professional Development Fund since its inception in June 2005.

The CPDF fund, this 2007 budget year, began June 1st, with \$124,633.53. So far, the CPDF Committee has met twice, in June and October, and awarded a total of \$ 73,714.17. There is approximately \$50,919.36 remaining in the CUPEU's Professional Development Fund to be used by May 31st, 2008. *Don't delay your applications.* A fourth round will only be held providing there are enough funds remaining.

The hard-working members of CPDF Committee appointed for the budget years 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 are:

Representing CUPEU

P. Charles Brown, VP Negotiations & PD

Kim Archer, OSD, and

Tasia Argyrakis (IITS)

Representing the University

Magalie Kanho, Human Resources,

Katie Sheahan, Director of Athletics and Recreation,

Bradley Tucker, Director of Institutional Planning

Inside this issue:

Mobilization Team Reunites	1
Professional Development Fund Report	1
Involve the Union early	1
Harassment and Work Place Violence	2
10 Tips for Negotiating a Win-win relationship at work	2
CA 101: Technological/ Administrative Changes and Major Budgetary Cuts	3

Important Notice to all CUPEU Members

By Jeremiah Woolsey, VP Membership

Please put the **November 29th General Assembly** on your schedule. It is important to get your feedback on our **Negotiations platform**. We will be depositing our Collective Agreement proposal at the beginning of 2008.

Also, look for details regarding CUPEU's upcoming **Holiday Party**. Details coming soon!

Professional Development Fund: Upcoming Dates For Applications:

- **Round 3: Jan. 22nd, 2008**
- **Round 4: April 15th, 2008**

Workplace Violence/Harassment: What is it, what can you do about it?

By Geoff Selig, President CUPEU

The September 10, 2003 Montreal Gazette contained an article entitled, "Workplace Violence growing, Quebec study indicates". The article stated that one in four Quebecers has witnessed some form of violence at work. It goes on to explain that in more than two-thirds of these cases, the violence occurred between a manager and an employee.

Concordia University has long been committed to a violence and harassment-free work environment. And, for the most part, this commitment has been met. Our experience, however, leads us to believe that this is an extremely difficult goal to attain. From time-to-time, we hear comments that lead us to believe that workplace harassment/violence still exists at Concordia. If this is the case, we wonder why this might be so? Why would employees be reticent to come forward and report a violent or harassing work environment? Possibly, people may not step forward because they are embarrassed or fear retaliation. CUPEU strongly encourages any employee who feels he/she may have been harassed to contact us for a confidential consultation as soon as possible. CUPEU is committed to supporting our members and doing everything possible to end harassment and workplace violence at Concordia University.



The following is a short overview of workplace harassment/violence:

"Workplace harassment is offensive, belittling or threatening behaviour directed at an individual worker or group of workers. [It] is behaviour that is unwelcome, unsolicited, usually unreciprocated and usually (but not always) repeated. It makes the workplace or association with work unpleasant, humiliating or intimidating for the individual or group targeted by this behaviour. It can make it difficult for effective work to be done.

"For harassment to occur, there does not have to be an intention to offend or harass. Moreover, harassing behaviour may be of a minor nature. Individual incidents may seem too trivial to warrant attention, or the person subjected to harassment may seem unaffected. Where the behaviour continues over a period and it is not addressed, however, such behaviour can undermine the standard of conduct within a work area.

Examples of harassing behaviour include:

- Offensive physical contact, derogatory language or intimidating actions;
- Insulting or threatening gestures or language (overt or implied) or continual and unwarranted shouting in the workplace;

- Unjustified and unnecessary comments about a person's work or capacity for work;
- Openly displayed pictures, posters, graffiti or written materials which might be offensive to some;
- Phone calls or messages on electronic mail or computer networks which are threatening, abusive or offensive to employees;
- Persistent following or stalking within the workplace, or to and from work or elsewhere; and
- Disparaging remarks about malingering to employees who have made a claim for [CSST or other university benefits]."

Where can you learn more? The Office des Normes du Travail website has a comprehensive review at: <http://www.cnt.gouv.qc.ca/en/normes/harcelement.asp>

Who can you speak to? You may contact any member of the CUPEU executive committee or any of the union council delegates for confidential support or counseling. For a list of these individuals visit: <http://cupeu.concordia.ca/location/contact.html>.

You may also contact Peter Coté, Advisor, Office of Rights and Responsibilities (848-2424-4857, email: peter.cote@concordia.ca) or Kristen Robillard, Ombudsman (848-2424-4963, email:

Kristen.Robillard@concordia.ca).

Getting Perspective – or How to Negotiate a Win-Win Deal at Work

By Dale Robinson, VP Communications

Everyone has difficulties with colleagues or supervisors from time to time. What matters is how you negotiate them. What can you do to avoid getting bogged down by this and forcing a potential grievance, or at the very least, experiencing more stress at work than is necessary? Here are 10 tips to help you successfully navigate through work difficulties to the benefit of both you and your colleague:

1. Identify the problem – write it down.
2. Break the problem down. What are its component parts? Which can you start with?
3. Identify what you each stand to gain by

repairing your differences (even in the case of nothing tangible, peace of mind at work counts for a lot).

4. Let go of being right (keep your ego out of it).
5. Let go of what "should be" to see what is.
6. Try to see the situation from your colleague's point of view.
7. Look for the most "efficient" response; what needs to be done to repair your differences (as opposed to what you think "should" happen)
8. Take a step back from the situation-observe yourself and how you are stuck.

What do you need to get unstuck?

9. In your mind, imagine you and your colleague have succeeded at finding a mutually beneficial compromise – what was the first step you took to get there?

10. What things do you and your colleague share in common? What can you achieve together that neither of you can achieve individually? (look for the super-ordinate goal).



Collective Agreement 101: Technological/Administrative Changes and Major Budgetary Cuts

By Christine Daviault, VP Grievance

There has been a lot of confusion surrounding the application of **Article 16** of the collective agreement. This article applies when a number of employees are about to be affected by major changes that can be the results of:

Technological changes such as the introduction of new technology (e.g., the use of scanned documents rather than paper ones)

Administrative changes (e.g., restructuring of a department and modifications to the roles of employees working within it)

Major budgetary cuts (e.g., restructuring and/or reductions in staffing due to cuts in a department or unit's operating budget)

The **results** of these changes can range from:

- a) The abolishment or creation of positions;
- b) Changes in the requirements for one or more positions;
- c) Changes in the major job responsibilities and/or areas of decision-making associated with one or more positions.

The University must give the Union notice of administrative or technological changes three (3) months prior to their implementation so it can:

- a) work with the University to guarantee that the changes are implemented in the most sensitive and transparent manner possible; and
- b) help the affected employees deal with the consequences of the changes.

The Union cannot prevent these changes from happening. What the Union can do is make sure that the people affected by the changes are a) apprised of the changes in advance and in a transparent and sensitive manner and b) helped in their transition. The Union cannot stop or reverse planned changes nor can it force the University to halt planned changes to professional positions or reinstate a professional employee into a position that has been changed. The Union cannot prevent the University from laying-off temporary employees by giving them two-weeks notice and paying for outstanding vacations and overtime. The Union can ensure that employees are offered everything they were entitled to receive including training, appropriate tools, and a suitable work environment to perform their new responsibilities and duties.

The Union can help people affected by the changes.

If you have any questions regarding **Article 16**, or want to report an administrative or technological change happening in your area, please contact **Christine Daviault (4092)** or **Geoff Selig (4224)**.

Upcoming Events:

General Assembly Nov. 29th

Union Council Meeting: Dec. 5th

Executive meeting: Dec. 6th.

Holiday Party: Dec. 10th

More details coming soon!

www.cupeu.org



CUPEU, The Concordia University Professional Employees Union began in 1988. It currently has more than 325 members who do professional work in a variety of settings in the university.

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