

# THE LOCAL

OPSEU 560 NEWSLETTER – DEC. 11, 2017

## WHAT CONSTITUTES NEW WORK OR OVERTIME?

Since we are accustomed to working as long as it takes to do our work and do it well, some of us are struggling with how to quantify new work. To help folks navigate what work is new, I will share some of my new preparation.

I teach *College English*, and *Current Issues in Canada*, an elective. The compressed term has required me not only to revise my assignments and lesson plans, but to re-think my pedagogical approach to help students meet the learning outcomes of my courses.

Because learning takes time and practice, both of which are now in short supply, I have had to integrate more hands-on work than I normally ask of students. For instance, in *College English*, I have had to remove some readings, which we use to learn comprehension and critical thinking. To integrate those skills, I devised new classroom activities, such as small group assignments that can be completed during class, preparing students for cumulative assignments. In these new exercises I have sought to develop critical thinking skills, comprehension, and composition, while not overwhelming students—no small task.

In my elective, the focus is more on content than on skills. It has been difficult to find new ways to deliver a comparable depth of content in less time. Since most of us rely on scaffolding skills and knowledge for our students, we cannot just cut out elements of our courses—we need to find new ways to scaffold, in less time. This has required new strategies and approaches, beyond revising assignments.

Thus, for instance, I have had to take some of our class time to run a library research workshop to make up for the short turnaround time of significant assignments. I have further had to revise my lectures to hone in on the main content that my students need while removing, where necessary, the larger context. I have also revised final exam questions to account for material that we did not get to cover adequately.

Though these are courses I have taught many times, each class has required new preparation.

The rapid changes and tension of the compressed term have also led to increased student stress, and, because we are the front line of contact with students, this has meant that I have been spending more time than usual in one-on-one meetings with students, helping them navigate course content and their anxieties. This too has cost me—in time and energy.

## PARTIAL LOAD FACULTY SHOULD TRACK HOURS

Many partial load faculty are, understandably, overworked and stressed, so have had trouble finding time to track their hours.

But, if you do not track your hours, there is no evidence that you have worked more hours than your workload would have been understood to require when you signed your contract.

Should the arbitrator award us overtime, we may need to demonstrate that we have completed that overtime.

The time chart sent by the WMG is our evidence. Please fill it out—you deserve to get paid for the hard work that you do.

## HARDSHIP FUND

The strike has ended; financial hardship has not. If you are experiencing **significant** hardship due to the strike, please email our confidential fund: [hardshipfund@opseu560.org](mailto:hardshipfund@opseu560.org)

**THANK YOU FROM  
PRESIDENT J. SINGER**

Our struggle now moves from the picket lines to boardrooms, arbitrators, and workload disputes. But it does so with a *demonstrably* unified, committed Union membership – a force that an arbitrator or a Ministry (or a college’s senior management) would be foolish to ignore.

Thank you all for “holding the line”. We have managed to create maybe the most successful strike nationwide in recent memory.

**We built safe, supporting picket lines.**

**We built solidarity.**

**We announced to the province that change is necessary and inevitable.**

Permit me to thank my Local officers and stewards, the tireless office workers, and the picket captains, as well as the drivers and our social media “picket line”.

At the York rally, I asked you to put your trust in each other. I’m gratified that you did, and that your faith was so well-placed.

**STRIKE PAY**

We are still correcting strike pay issues. If you have an outstanding strike pay issue, please send a detailed email to [strikepay@opseu560.org](mailto:strikepay@opseu560.org). Issues will be addressed from this account only.

**OPSEU Local 560**  
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**FULL-TIME FACULTY SHOULD SUBMIT  
SWFs TO WMG**

Let’s ensure that our work is recognized

The Standard Workload Form (SWF), for which we have fought vigorously, is the contract between you and our managers. The SWF identifies what we are asked to do and specifies how much time is allocated to complete those tasks. It is designed to ensure that our work is accurately recorded and remunerated. We need it to be accurate so that we are paid correctly.

Because of the duration of the strike, there are now some glaring errors on Fall and Winter SWFs.

The fall SWF states that our work term ends on December 15. That is no longer accurate. We have been assigned to work until January 10. This may not seem like a huge discrepancy, but consider this: we lost five weeks of pay, and have been asked to make up that work —without earning back the lost pay. We need to ask to have our SWFs revised to reflect these newly-assigned weeks, to support our argument that we should be remunerated for them.

Further, completing the term will require overtime work from us all. We need that work recognized and recorded on our SWFs.

You should request a revised Fall SWF from your manager – one that has corrected dates and accumulated totals, and that reflects the number of hours that your assigned work *actually* requires. If your manager refuses to revise your SWF, submit your SWF to the Workload Monitoring Group (WMG). The WMG is made up of union representatives and management’s HR representatives. At that stage, your union representatives will speak on your behalf, but you need to empower the union to do so by filing the case with the WMG.

Secondly, the bottom of Winter SWFs indicates that we are credited with having worked 14 weeks in the Fall term. Again, this is inaccurate. This needs to be revised as well.

Ultimately, as the 1989 strike showed, should the arbitrator award overtime, you may not be eligible for overtime if you do not claim it. That year only some faculty had an additional cheque waiting in their mailboxes—those who pushed to have their work recognized. We, as a union, want all our work properly recognized and remunerated. We know, however, that probationary faculty are in a precarious position, and may wish not to submit SWFs.



**Empower your union representatives to fight on your behalf by following the process established by our Collective Agreement.**

Workload Monitoring Group: [wmg@opseu560.org](mailto:wmg@opseu560.org)  
Other issues: [union@opseu560.org](mailto:union@opseu560.org)  
[www.opseu560.org](http://www.opseu560.org)