
THE LOCAL

OPSEU Local 560 at Seneca College

FALL, 2013

When the Workplace is Not a Welcoming Place

by Larry Olivo, Chief Steward, OPSEU 560

Most faculty think the work they do is worthwhile and important, and enjoy the interaction with students and colleagues. Unfortunately, that is not true for all.

Consider the following:

- Prof. X at a curriculum meeting expressed some concerns about course content. Her chair disagreed with her, and belittled her in public, making snide, personal remarks about her intelligence. Prof. X no longer feels comfortable about saying anything at meetings.
- Prof. Y 's chair constantly makes belittling comments to her about her teaching ability, without ever having observed her teaching.

- Prof. Z is always the butt of jokes about his weight by his chair, the remarks usually being made in the office area, in the hearing of others. He has taken to staying in his office between classes, and leaving immediately after the last class so as to avoid contact with the chair and his colleagues.

The kinds of incidents described here can be psychologically devastating but are not without remedy. Under Article 4 of the collective agreement behavior that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome may amount to bullying or harassment if:

- It adversely affects an employee's dignity, psychological or physical integrity or

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GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND ELECTION FOR LOCAL PRESIDENT

Tuesday, October 29, 2013, 6-9 p.m.

Location: Zion Church Cultural Centre, 1650 Finch Ave East, Toronto, M2J 4X9 [Don Mills and Finch adjacent to Skymark Plaza]

See our website <http://opseu560.org> for **map** and **parking** details. Note this new location is faster to get to from S@Y and King, and more transit-friendly. Call us at 416-495-1599 with any questions. Child/Elder care will be reimbursed.

Agenda

- Election—first new president in 25 years! Possible election of 1st VP as well. Note you must be a Steward to run for office.
- Partial Load Sick Days
- Negotiations 2014 Update

Parking is available at Newnham campus. In addition, 20 parking permits for the Plaza at Don Mills and Finch are also available for any non-Newnham faculty. If you need a parking permit for accessibility reasons, please contact union@opseu560.org in advance of the meeting.

i's Wide Shut

by Beth Agnew, Equity VP, OPSEU 560

Periodic announcements from the President's office indicate that the i3 project (Information, Integration and Innovation) is well underway. It has completed the fit-gap phase, and is moving inexorably toward completion in 2015.

Couched in Deloitte corporate jargon, the fit-gap phase examined how the project could meet Seneca's business requirements. During the fit-gap, staff seconded to the i3 project, as well as subject matter experts from Finance, Payroll, Human Resources, Registration, Admissions, Student Services, Career Services, Facilities and Information Technology Services, participated in the more than 80 workshops that were held.

We're dismayed to note that among the "change champions" assigned to the project, teaching faculty are notable by their absence. As subject matter experts in teaching and learning, we would have thought that such knowledge would be valuable to a project that is meant to overhaul how

we do things at Seneca. Having input from people who spend a great deal of time in the classroom, and who use all the above-named services, could ensure that the needs of those faculty are met, or at least not overlooked.

Classroom scheduling, number of students in courses, Blackboard — all are facets of teaching that affect faculty.

We wonder why nobody thought to include teaching faculty as a stakeholder group. Chairs aren't involved, either, so that leaves the academic side much too light on representation.

The i3 team is now well into the design phase of the project. Meetings and workshops with subject matter experts from across the College continue, with a focus on identifying and designing the systems and processes for the future — systems and processes that faculty, whether consulted or not, will have to utilize.



What is a Fit-Gap Analysis?

Part of the project life cycle, this analysis is intended to match systems with the organization's needs, to determine any gaps and formulate solutions. It tackles key issues and controversial topics, and should look at functional roles and groups within the organization. In other words, it should analyze who does what in the organization, and lead toward decisions about how those tasks are best accomplished.

Blackboard to be Updated with the New Grading Policy

When the grading policy was changed to make an F 0-49% instead of 0-54%, somebody forgot to tell the BB Admin. Not to worry. They have now been alerted to upgrade the grade schemas in the Grade Center.

What is not changing are the default values for letter grades. They continue to be the lowest value for each letter. If you enter an A, for example, Blackboard considers that to be an 80, not the mid-range value of 85 (A=80-89). Three Bs and one C+ will calculate to a final grade of 68.75% or C+. (B=70, C+=65) When your students wonder why they ended up with a C+ after achieving three B assignments, you can tell them how that occurred.

Your WMG Representatives

If you have any questions about your workload, you should feel free to contact any Local 560 steward. In addition, the four union representatives on the Workload Monitoring Group can provide expert 'insider' advice. The current members are:

Larry Olivo: 491-5050, Ext. 22814
lolivo@sympatico.ca

Paul Matson: 491-5050, Ext. 22434
pmatson@opseu560.org

Jonathan Singer: 491-5050, Ext. 26010
jsinger@opseu560.org

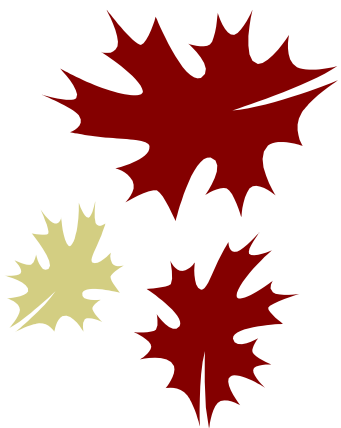
Daria Magas-Zamaria 491-5050, Ext. 33281
dariazamaria@gmail.com

If you are a teacher who does not have a 4-year university degree, this is for you:

Teachers without a 4-year university degree cannot progress to the top step and the top salary without additional training. Depending on qualifications, you may top off at step 16, 17, 18 or 19. That's a minimum loss of \$5393 and up to \$13486 annually! This has a significant impact on lifetime earnings, and on pension.

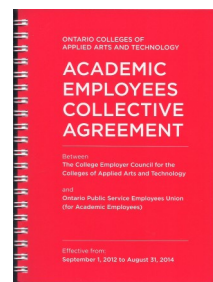
But there is a way to get to the top step. As you get near to your current top step, you can enroll in the In Service Teacher Training Program, a part time program that will, if you complete the program give you access to the maximum salary steps. If you have more than 15 years of service when you enroll you will immediately progress one step upon enrolling — that could result in an additional \$2,696 to your annual salary.

For more information contact the local at union@opseu560.org, or go to the OPSEU central website link to the In Service Teacher Training Program at http://www.opseu.org/caat/caat_ac/training.htm



Wishing you all a fulfilling Fall semester!

Collective Agreements are available from your steward in printed form, and as a PDF on the Local website. Get yours now!
<http://opseu560.org>



<http://www.facebook.com/pages/OPSEU-560/181935308386>



<http://www.twitter.com/OPSEU560>



THE LOCAL is a publication of OPSEU Local 560, the faculty union of Seneca College. Please feel free to copy any original material with appropriate credit.

We welcome submissions and correspondence, which should be sent to Barbara Paterson, Secretary, OPSEU Local 560, at Newnham Campus or at 2942 Finch Avenue East, Suite 119, Scarborough, Ontario, M1W 2T4, or by fax to (416) 495-7573, or by e-mail to union@opseu560.org Call us at (416) 495-1599 or visit the Local 560 Web Site at: <http://opseu560.org>



The Brave New World of the Seneca Parking System

by Larry Olivo, Chief Steward, OPSEU560

With the increasing number of managers at the college, it was only a matter of time until some of them got the idea to “do something” about parking at the college. And they have. You may have noticed the new gate controls and other complicated gizmos to oversee what one might call the parking process. One would think that getting into a parking space will be a swift and efficient operation.

But notwithstanding all the resources put into marketing the new parking system to those who have to use it, the reality that has emerged for most faculty is one of frustration, confusion and irritation. We don't know if the “customers” have been complaining to college managers, but the union has received plenty of feedback. Consider:

- At King, it was reported, the ticket stations cum barriers are not at the parking lots, but close to the Dufferin Street entrance. The result, we are told, is lineups of up to 30 minutes to get in during peak periods, with traffic backing onto Dufferin Street.
- At Newnham, faculty report that if you don't arrive before 9 a.m, the usual staff lot is full up, and you can scramble for a space in one of the outer lots in the nether part of the universe. The small print on the application for a parking permit is worthy of some kind of fly-by-night operation: it says you are not guaranteed a parking space, just a lower rate to park than you would pay on a per diem basis. Honest, it really says that. I am not making this up.
- For those faculty who use a car only occasionally, it is no longer possible to get a faculty card to park in the staff pay-as-you-go lot. Now, if your choice is to pay as you go, you can park in the outer lots, somewhere in the neighbourhood of Pluto or Uranus.
- Faculty who drive occasionally may want to load their One Card for those few times when they need to park. Forget about it. You can't bank credit for parking on your one card and use it when you decide to. Instead, faculty tell us, you need to know the date you are

planning to park in a pay as you go lot, and must credit your one card for that declared date.

- Of course if you want to pay as you go, you can use your credit card, but you won't get into any staff lots. And get there by dawn, or you will be parking on Uranus.
- If you are a sessional teaching for only 7 weeks, as is the case for some sessionals in the English Language Institute, and you want to buy a permit you have to buy it for the whole semester—and pay for a space you won't use for half the time period. No refunds, apparently.

On the other hand, there is no charge to use the bike racks—so far.



Have you Heard?

Like Partial-Load faculty have been able to do under their Collective Agreement with the Colleges, Part-Time faculty are now also eligible to enroll in the CAAT-A Pension Plan. In fact, Part-Time faculty will be automatically enrolled in the CAAT-A pension plan as of January 1st 2014. When you joined the college, were you told that you were eligible to participate in the CAAT pension plan? Please e-mail us at union@opseu560.org to let us know if you were informed of this.



Squeezing them In!

If you have more students than space, please notify Muriel McKenna, our Health and Safety Officer [muriel.mckenna@sympatico.ca]. There are issues about whether the college is putting more students into classrooms than is permitted by the Fire Code. First semester classes are a likely focus for this and at King our inquiries have resulted in a college application to the area municipality for an amendment to the code based on furniture and layout. We have asked for a copy of the request and reply documents but have not yet received them. We hear the matter is now in the hands of the Ontario Fire Marshall's Office.

Counting Past 260

As the new term begins, full time faculty are advised to check the student numbers on their SWFs and count heads now that we've passed day 10. If you have student numbers that exceed 260, inform your manager.


Management has learned they minimize their costs by creating ever larger classes. This in turn can create a much greater demand for out of class assistance to students, particularly where complex skills, and hands on applications are being taught.

Article 11.01 F 2 can provide some relief. Here is how it works:

1. Add up the total number of students in your assigned classes to see if the number is more than 260.
2. If you have more than 260 students, consider whether the 4 hours of out of class assistance to students is sufficient to meet student needs.
3. If you decide that you need more time, discuss the matter with your supervisor with a view to finding ways to provide the necessary assistance.
4. In the absence of any agreement, the CA provides that you shall be attributed an additional 0.015 hours for every student in excess of 260.

If you are unable to agree on an appropriate amount of extra attributed time on the back of the SWF, contact one of the union members of the






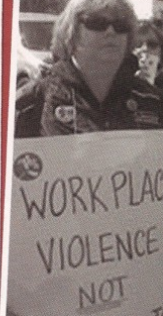
History test

Who fought to establish and protect...

1) public education?	<input type="checkbox"/> Unions	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporations
2) child care?	<input type="checkbox"/> Unions	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporations
3) public health care?	<input type="checkbox"/> Unions	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporations
4) women's rights?	<input type="checkbox"/> Unions	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporations
5) unemployment insurance?	<input type="checkbox"/> Unions	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporations
6) maternity/parental leave?	<input type="checkbox"/> Unions	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporations
7) workplace safety laws?	<input type="checkbox"/> Unions	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporations
8) higher minimum wage?	<input type="checkbox"/> Unions	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporations
9) equity legislation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Unions	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporations
10) improved Canada Pension?	<input type="checkbox"/> Unions	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporations

Answers: 1) Unions 2) Unions 3) Unions 4) Unions 5) Unions 6) Unions 7) Unions 8) Unions 9) Unions 10) Unions





Local 560's Website Updated

Check out our new blog-style website, your source for information about the union. Don't forget to sign up for our news service to stay up to date.
<http://opseu560.org>

Graphic courtesy of CUPE 4400, Toronto Education Workers

The Road to Our Next Collective Agreement...

by Jonathan Singer, Interim President, OPSEU 560

We are now entering the final year of our current Collective Agreement with the College Employers Council, and already steps are being taken to prepare for bargaining the next CA. Below are some of the steps and dates that will be relevant as we get closer to the process of demand-setting and negotiations.

As several of the steps listed below will depend upon input from or communications to all faculty in Local 560, please ensure today that the Local Communications Officer has access to your off-campus e-mail address, by sending a message from that address to news@opseu560.org.

* * *

Oct. 26-27, 2013: Elected delegates from all College Locals will elect seven of those delegates as the bargaining team to negotiate the next Collective Agreement on behalf of all College faculty.

Winter, 2014: Pre-bargaining surveys may be distributed to Seneca faculty by the OPSEU Local

560 Officers, to gain an understanding of the issues most important to faculty in the upcoming round of bargaining.

Spring, 2014: All College Locals will meet individually to vote to put forward demands that they wish to see in the next round of bargaining. A strike authorization vote could be taken as early as this time.

April, 2014: The elected delegates of all College Locals will vote on and rank the demands put forward by the individual locals, to charge the Bargaining Team with a focused and coherent set of demands for the upcoming round of bargaining.

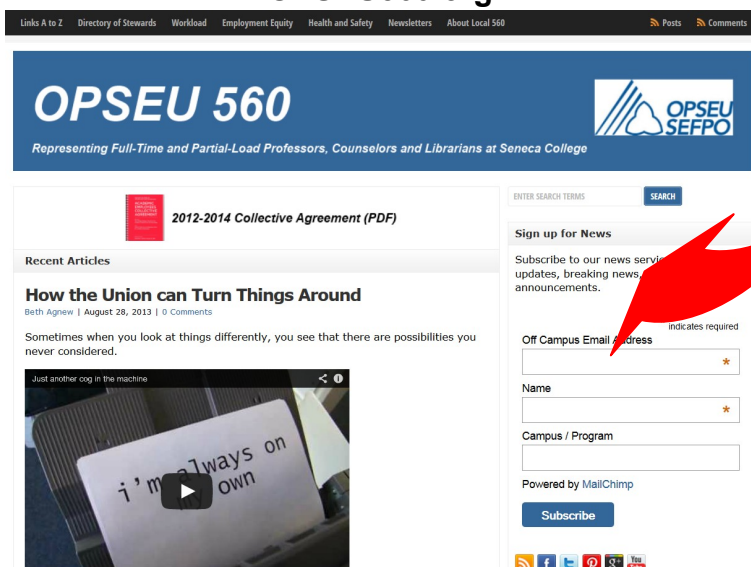
June 2, 2014: The earliest date at which negotiation of the new Collective Agreement could begin.

August 31, 2014: The current Collective Agreement between OPSEU and the College Employer Council expires.

DON'T MISS A THING!

Bookmark the OPSEU Website and sign up for our news update service.

OPSEU560.org



Links A to Z Directory of Stewards Workload Employment Equity Health and Safety Newsletters About Local 560 Posts Comments

OPSEU 560

Representing Full-Time and Partial-Load Professors, Counselors and Librarians at Seneca College

2012-2014 Collective Agreement (PDF)

Recent Articles

How the Union can Turn Things Around

Beth Agnew | August 28, 2013 | 0 Comments

Sometimes when you look at things differently, you see that there are possibilities you never considered.

Just another cog in the machine

i'm always on my own

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Labour News Roundup

by Editor, CALM (Canadian Association of Labour Media)

Tory policy vote approves no mandatory union membership

After Ontario Progressive Conservative leader Tim Hudak's relentless attack on unionized workers, it came as no surprise that the party voted in favour of a policy that would eliminate the mandatory collection of union dues at this past weekend's convention. What was surprising was that the vote was divided, with just 53 per cent of delegates voting in favour of the motion. Some party members feared that this and other anti-worker policies would drive union members away from the party.

Tim Hudak's labour policies targeted by documentary

The Ontario Public Service Employees' Union (OPSEU) launched a 20-minute documentary in London, Ontario, which demonstrates the havoc that Tim Hudak's proposed labour legislation will wreak on Ontario's workers. The film features stories from the United States where similar legislation has been implemented. One of the elements of the legislation has meant that states with so-called "Right to Work" legislation pay workers, on average, \$1500 less. The documentary's premiere aired at the same time as the convention of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario

Public sector unions brace for tough, divisive bargaining

With 17 of 27 federal public service contracts expiring in 2014, the leaders of 18 unions representing public sector workers are holding a summit in Montreal to develop a common strategy. The union leaders are anticipating that bargaining will be difficult, as some government officials have already announced their intention to overhaul sick days and replace them with short-term disability leaves and challenge mandatory dues collection. With bargaining happening a year in advance of the next federal election, some fear that bargaining will be influenced by the Tories' electoral strategy.

Firefighters' union says cost-cutting putting safety at risk

Firefighters in the City of Winnipeg have criticized cutbacks that have reduced the number of trucks and available firefighters to try and curb overtime costs. Alex Forrest, president of the United Fire Fighters of Winnipeg argues that these cutbacks will place public safety at risk. In a letter to Mayor Sam Katz and all city councilors, Forrest said that the decision not only increases the potential to public danger, but it is also a violation of the collective agreement. One of the changes proposed is that fire trucks will not be dispatched until a fire is confirmed, slowing response times.

(Continued from page 1)

- It may be a single incident or a pattern of conduct or
- The conduct could reasonably be regarded as intending to intimidate, offend, degrade or humiliate someone whether or not that was the actual intention
- Results in a harmful work environment

Note that the chair may not have intended the comments to be detrimental, but if the impact is harmful then it may result in a finding of harassment or bullying.

If you find yourself in a position where you feel you are being bullied or harassed by a supervisor, another employee, by a student, or even a member of the public, the college has an obligation as an employer to take positive steps to stop the conduct complained of, and remedy the situation. If the college does nothing, or the steps it takes are inadequate, you have the right to grieve. The grievance is not subject to the usual time limits, and if the harasser or bully is your supervisor, the grievance is heard by a more senior manager. You may be assured of your union's support throughout the process.

Questions or concerns should be addressed to the Local's Chief Steward, Larry Olivo [lolivo@opseu560.org] or the Local's VP Equity, Beth Agnew [bagnew@opseu560.org]

The Back Page

Mini the MOOCher

by Howard A. Doughty, Steward – King Campus

It's been a scant 82 years since American jazz legend Cab Calloway recorded "Minnie the Moocher," which was his biggest hit and remained his signature tune until his death in 1994. I vividly recall the first time I heard it and wondered about its odd message (you can look it up); I now invoke it as the sound track for an even more curious "conversation."

Today, "Minnie" has become "Mini" for eviscerated, shadow techno-education. It's "Mini" for minimal. And the "Moocher" is now the MOOCher, for a wholesale corporate assault on postsecondary education.

MOOCs, for the uninitiated, are Massive Open Online Courses. They are being prepared and marketed by high-end private universities in the United States and by a new crop of corporations with postmodern names such as edX, Coursera, UDACITY, Udemy, P2PU and the Bill Gates-backed Khan Academy (that's "con," with a "K"). Intellectual centres such as Ernst & Young are 100% supportive.

For the past year, I've been debating them (where else?) online, where a robust discussion is taking place under the auspices of journals such as *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and a number of Linked-In discussion groups ("The Teaching Professor," "Inside Higher Education," etc.) of which I'm an active member.

On the one hand, MOOCs are touted as the inevitable future of higher education. They are cheap, easy and attract (according to their fans) tens, if not hundreds of thousands of "customers." Pro-MOOC rhetoric centres on accessibility, democracy, efficiency and economy. Sort of like Walmart.

MOOCs involve televised lectures, online chat-rooms (seminars) and largely multiple-choice tests if you take them for "credit." Plans are afoot for MOOCiversities, which will award degrees of undetermined value if you leap through enough virtual hoops (and pay enough money). I've taken a couple of courses. The lectures were entertaining, but I was unimpressed with the rest—although, like Premier Kathleen Wynne, I can now claim to be "Harvard-educated."

Toronto Star, Fri Sep 20, 2013:

- Heather Mallick's Op-Ed piece on higher education. She writes: "Queen's Park is quietly working on another project, bringing MOOCs — massive open online courses — to Ontario, which is the grenade in the room. They haven't pulled the pin yet. They will."

<http://tinyurl.com/ljkh9cm>

Critics make a better case. MOOCs more deeply undermine academic freedom by controlling course content from central corporate sources, eliminate flesh-and-blood teachers or distribute full-time jobs to vulnerable contract workers, and further isolate students by getting rid of bricks, mortar and human faces. In the process, education suffers from *Anorexia Academica*.

True, MOOCs might make useful additions to the Discovery Channel or late-night PBS broadcasting schedules; however, they mainly inspire monotone repetitions of Chauncey Gardner's classic line in the film *Being There*: "I like to watch TV."

And what does this portend for Seneca? I'd like to know. You may recall that the college's commitment to "Core Literacies" was announced with great fanfare about a year ago. No doubt the authorities are busily transforming life at Seneca behind closed doors. We'll hear about it in detail one day, though teachers are

being systematically excluded from the planning process. Likewise, I have little doubt that top administrative minds are now feverishly trying to figure out how to MOOCify Seneca.

The real problem, therefore, is not the quality and value (or lack thereof) in the MOOCisphere. It's the absence of transparency and collegiality in the corporate culture of the college. It teaches teachers an important lesson: when it comes to charting the future, we simply do not count.

Or, as Cab Calloway sang: "Hi dee hi dee hi dee ho!" (As I said, you can look it up.)