

Newsbreak

Volume 31, Issue 2

April 2021

www.opseu562.org

Professional development days

Leon King, Faculty of Applied Science and Technology

Have you been able to take your Professional Development (PD) days, or have you been squeezed out of having available time during the working year?

Under the Collective Agreement (clause 11.01 H1 & H2), the College shall allow each teacher **at least** ten working days of professional development, and shall include **at least** five days which are consecutive. The content of these days is up to you and may include activities such as attending Showcase, reading, taking online or offline courses, attending or giving a seminar, exploring ideas by sketching, writing or creating, developing skills, keeping up with professional news and developments either related to one's specialty or to the topic of education, networking activities with colleagues in the field, different departments, different colleges and so forth. It's not for course related development, though it may lead there eventually.

In the not so distant past, May-June was an appropriate time for curriculum review, facilities planning and professional development. Terms were 16 weeks long with 32 weeks of teaching. Not any more. I don't know what it is like in other divisions but in the Faculty of Applied

Science and Technology, the shortening of the school term has led to near full time teaching in May-June or July-August, with courses split between two or more people. The Winter term ends on April 30, marks are due on May 5 and classes begin on May 8 and the semester ends June 25. For those electing to teach in July-August, vacation starts on May 3 so the turnaround time for marks is even shorter. The number of teaching weeks, while still under the 36 week maximum, has grown due to the new 14 week semester format to $14 + 14 + 7 = 35$. The benefit of the reduced instruction format for the college has been a more modularized instruction unit by splitting courses between teachers in the summer. The result is that the ten day goal is more of a ceiling rather than a floor.

To date, this year, I've been able to extract four PD days from my schedule of teaching, marking and preparation. There's no further consecutive run of five days, as there might have been in the past. Reading weeks are taken up with marking and preparation. The time from January 4 - 14 was a possibility but follow up on the previous term's final exams, preparation and meetings took its toll.

PD days continued on page 7

Inside this issue:

Bargaining update.	3	Organizing for power.	7
President's report	4	SFQs: Change is coming.	8
PL Perspectives.	6	John Stammers Memorial Scholarship. . .	8

Stay Connected:

Subscribe to our mailing list: <http://eepurl.com/cmqPGz>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/OPSEULocal562/

Twitter: https://twitter.com/CAATA_local562

Email: info@opseu562.org

Local 562 Website: www.opseu562.org

Newsbreak is a publication of the Humber College Faculty Union, OPSEU Local 562, intended to provide information and stimulate discussion. We invite your participation and welcome your contributions. All articles and letters should be signed, though in some circumstances the author's name will be withheld upon request. We encourage thoughtful discussion that respects human rights. We reserve the right to edit for libel, length, and clarity.

Articles reporting on union business will be signed and will include the author's position of responsibility in the local. Where an article has the author's name only, the views are those of the author. You may e-mail the editor: newsbreak@opseu562.org or drop materials at the Faculty Union office – Room F105, North Campus, ext. 4007

OPSEU Local 562 Officers

President - Pearline Lung
1st Vice-President - Bob Bolf
2nd Vice-President - Urszula Kosecka
Chief Steward - Rena Borovilos
Secretary - Chandra Hodgson
Treasurer - Sylvia Ciuciura

Surface / Internal Mail

OPSEU Local 562
Humber College
205 Humber College Blvd, Room F105

Local 562 Admin. Assistant - Sharini Wijeyesekera
Newsbreak Editor - Sylvia Ciuciura

See the list of [stewards](#) on our website.



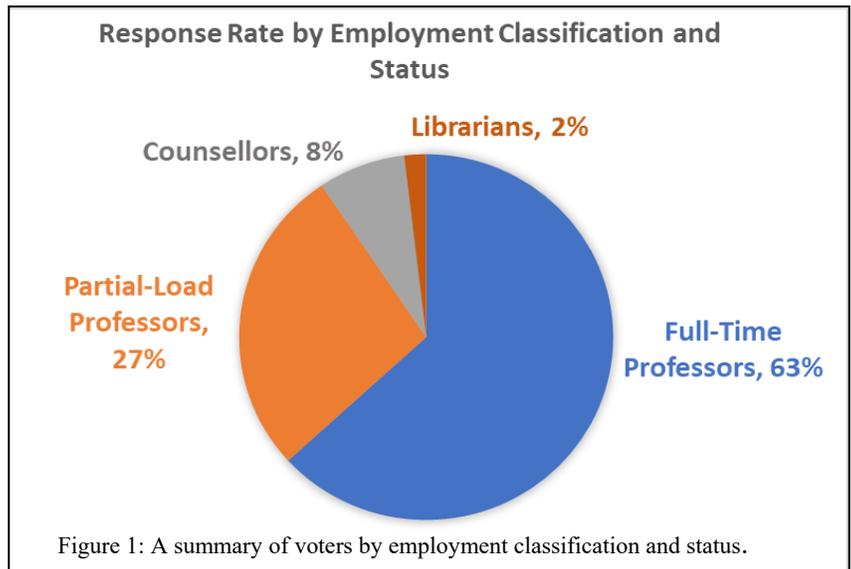
Bargaining update

Pearline Lung, President, OPSEU Local 562

In February, the Local held three virtual Local Demand Set meetings. It was a very busy time of year, and we appreciate that many of you took the time to attend the meeting, participate in the discussions, and take part in the demand set voting process. Thank you! A special thank you to our Bargaining Team members, JP Hornick and Kathleen Flynn, for joining us on all three days, and actively listening and responding to our members and their concerns.

During the meetings, members spoke candidly about the challenges of their current working conditions. At the polls, all employment classifications and statuses were represented (see Figure 1). After the third session, the results of the survey were tallied and sent to OPSEU and the Bargaining Team.

In the survey, faculty were asked to prioritize the themes in order of importance. The results, shown in Figure 2, indicate that workload is the most important item that Humber faculty want addressed in this round of bargaining. The pandemic has magnified the challenges that all faculty – professors, counsellors, and librarians – have been facing with respect to workload, especially in the online and remote environment.



On April 9 - 10, 2021, OPSEU will be holding a Final Demand Set meeting, where elected delegates and alternates will discuss and vote on the top priorities for this round of bargaining. We will continue to work with your elected Bargaining Team and the leaders of the Division to ensure that your voice is heard. 🗳️

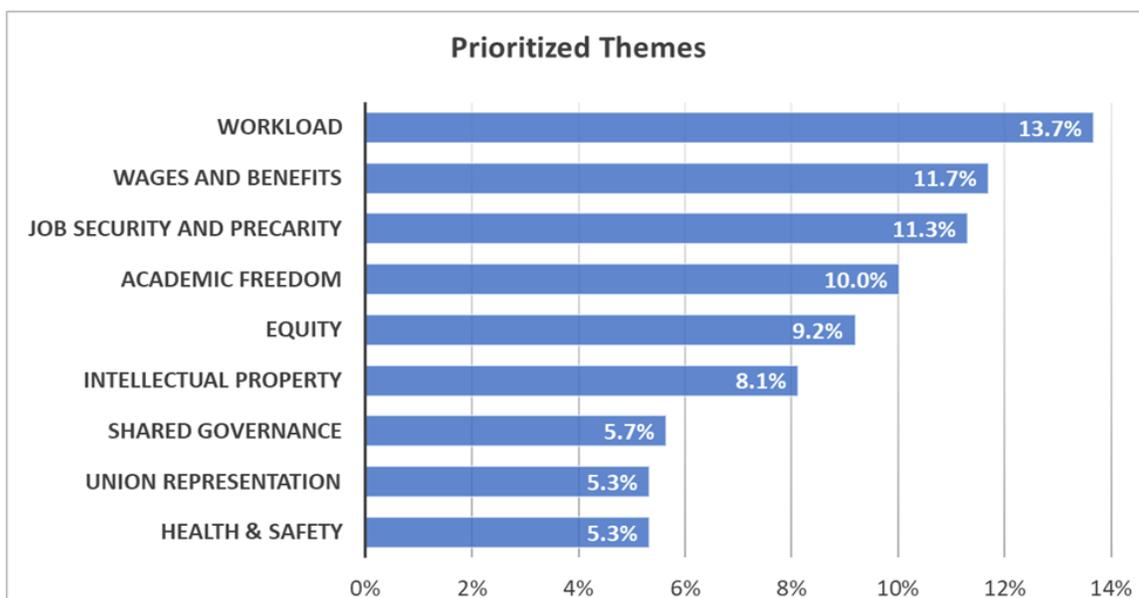


Figure 2: Themes ranked in priority sequence.

Chief Steward's report

Rena Borovilos, Chief Steward, OPSEU Local 562

As noted in the last Chief Steward Report (November, 2020), for quite some time the College has shown little interest in working with the Local to resolve grievances at the grievance hearing. This resulted in the Local having to refer more and more grievances to arbitration. Interestingly, in late 2020, the College began showing a willingness to resolve grievances before they got to arbitration. While it's too early to conclude that the College is charting a new, more cooperative course, the Local is happy to report that we have been able to successfully resolve a number of grievances without having to go to arbitration.

Resolved Local 562 Grievances

Each of the following four faculty grievances were recently settled in favour of the grievor. The grievances are listed by the date they were submitted to the College.

1. November 11, 2020: A partial-load (PL) member grieved the miscalculation of their service credits.
2. January 15, 2021: A full-time (FT) member grieved unjust discipline.
3. January 15, 2021: A second FT member grieved unjust discipline.
4. January 21, 2021: A PL member grieved not being offered a PL contract in the winter 2021 semester

Local 562 Grievances Before the College

Currently, the Local has one grievance before the College. It is listed below by date of submission:

1. February 26, 2021: A PL member grieves that the College incorrectly calculated their salary step by not considering their accumulated work experience outside of the College.

Local 562 Grievances Referred to Arbitration

Since the publication of the last Chief Steward's Report (November, 2020), the Local has referred the following 3 grievances to arbitration. They are listed by date of referral.

1. December 4, 2020: FT member grieves not being paid for work they completed during the summer vacation period.

2. January 15, 2021: FT member grieves that the College incorrectly calculated their salary step by not giving proper recognition to one of their educational credentials.
3. March 11, 2021: the Local grieves that the College is not properly recognizing the Professional Engineer (P.Eng.) designation when calculating faculty salary steps.

Local 562 Active Arbitration Hearings

The following two grievances are currently being heard by an arbitrator. An arbitration hearing can take several non-consecutive days.

1. FT member who grieves that they were harassed and discriminated against by the College on account of their disability, including being pressured to fill out intrusive medical forms under threat of loss of benefits and pay.
2. FT member who grieves that the College breached their right to academic freedom by changing the grades that the member assigned to their students.

Future Local 562 Grievances

Through the remaining weeks of the Winter 2021 semester and beyond, we encourage you to contact a Local Steward or Officer if you suspect that your manager or any other agent of the College is violating your rights under the Collective Agreement (CA). By submitting a grievance on your behalf, the Union is holding the College to account and ensuring that our hard-earned CA rights continue to be maintained.

Remember, there are three types of grievances that can be submitted to the College: 1) a **faculty individual grievance** that contains the complaint of one member, 2) a **faculty group grievance** where two or more members jointly grieve, and 3) a **union (policy) grievance** where a complaint is taken up by the Local on behalf of the membership. Given the number of members that have been contacting the Union to complain about unfair treatment, it is likely that there will be an increase in all three types of grievances in the months ahead. 🙏

PL Perspectives:

The need for a PL SWF

Partial-load (PL) faculty are often left out of important conversations that affect not only the faculty, but their students and how courses are taught. More often than not, these conversations add more work to already over-worked PL faculty, work they have not agreed to and for which they won't be fairly compensated. The current model that treats PL faculty like curriculum delivery systems, instead of respecting the need for all faculty to adequately prepare and reflect on curriculum and its delivery, is untenable. The narrow view of PL work as only Teaching Contact Hours (TCH) prevents collaboration with our colleagues and participation in broader institutional initiatives.

This recent example comes from several Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) meetings in the English Department. Faculty were encouraged to share their teaching experiences and how this narrative supports diverse student needs. The goal of these meetings was to think of areas for curriculum development, through an EDI lens, for the May-June period (the upcoming summer semester).

PL faculty were invited to participate in these meetings. However, as an unpaid observer who wouldn't be part of the decision-making or implementation processes in the May-June period, I was invisible—I didn't feel comfortable asking questions, or questioning the process, or voicing my concerns. The process was fundamentally flawed: if our courses don't already meet benchmarks for equity, diversity, and inclusion, then our courses need to be rebuilt, from the ground up, not have additional content added just to "show" that we are following EDI. This is difficult work, and it can be fraught. It's risky to take on certain types of

"hot topics" in the classroom. How can PL faculty even begin to be part of these types of conversations when they themselves aren't being treated fairly by the institution? PL faculty don't have a voice in these conversations and aren't given a safe space to voice their concerns.

This issue relates to the need for a PL Standard Workload Formula (SWF). Academic work like curriculum development and paid meetings would be reflected in a SWF. Without it, PL faculty are not treated as real employees, but rather as transient, temporary, and disposable. This is not a true reflection of PL faculty. This is our career; we are passionate and dedicated to teaching and to helping students achieve their education and career goals. We are highly educated and experienced, with great resiliency and flexibility. Some of us are working towards being Full-time (FT) in the future, and some of us would like to remain PL. But we are all committed employees. We need to be recognized and given a space where we feel safe and supported so that we can create safe spaces to support our students.

We have real work ahead of us in breaking down the barriers in the way our courses are taught and developed, as well as in terms of how students are evaluated. This can't be achieved equitably without a PL SWF that would ensure our true workload and class sizes are reflected in a document we agree to, just like the FTs. Ahead of us is a long, but fruitful road of discussion, research, and development about what it actually means to be inclusive—for students and for faculty. 🏗️

If you want to get more involved in discussing PL issues at the college, contact chandra.hodgson@gmail.com and join our Partial-Load Committee

PD days continued from page 1

Partial-load, part time, and sessional faculty do not have this benefit in their contracts and are expected to do Professional Development on their own time.

I've asked my Associate Dean to account for PD time on my SWF and was turned down on the basis that it was not the college's practice to record it. If it's not measured then it is assumed that the

time is taken up by other activity.

So what to do?

What is your experience with taking time out to do your own professional development? What kind of activities were you able to engage in? Send your thoughts and reactions to lk-prodevDays@bell.net and I'll summarize your responses in an article. Your confidentiality will be respected. 📧



ORGANIZING FOR POWER

May 18 - June 22

WORKERS RISING EVERYWHERE

ROSA LUXEMBURG STIFTUNG

Join us on May 18 for Workers Rising Everywhere, the 4th training in the [Organizing for Power](#) series led by [Jane McAlevey](#) and hosted by the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, this time featuring new trainers and inspiring stories from across the world.

If you are interested in participating in this free training, please contact Chandra Hodgson at Chandra@opseu562.org by May 1st.



Johnson Insurance is proud to be partnered with
OPSEU 562 Humber College Faculty

Johnson is offering discounts on auto, home, health, and dental benefits to all OPSEU Local 562 members.

For more info, visit our website:
<http://www.opseu562.org/johnson-insurance>

JOHNSON
INSURANCE

SFQs: Change is coming

Chandra Hodgson, Secretary, OPSEU Local 562

Faculty have been raising concerns about the current SFQ (Student Feedback Questionnaire) tool for years, especially when administered online, in light of equity, diversity, and inclusion. Online delivery of the tool has led to an increase in harassing and irrelevant comments and has taken much needed context for student responses out of the equation for instructors as we no longer have any control over when, how, or where they are completed (let alone the thorny question of who is actually completing them).

A [rising tide of current research](#) concurs: these tools tend to reproduce existing social inequalities and faculty from equity-seeking groups therefore bear a disparate psychological and reputational burden under our current processes.

We have connected this burden to institutional goals in hiring and retaining a diverse workforce, as well as the institution's responsibility to protect workers from a known source of harassment and discrimination.

We're pleased to report that a College-wide Working Group has been struck to oversee changes in how we solicit and use student feedback. This Working Group has already begun to examine the purpose of these tools, and in-

vestigate alternatives that would increase their potential as tools for professional development for faculty while reducing their potential to cause harm.

Committee membership includes a wide variety of administrative leadership, such as the AVP, Academic; the Dean of Students; Senior Deans; ADs; and Directors from across the college including from Teaching and Learning; and the Centre for Human Rights, Equity and Inclusion. There is union representation on the committee, and some participation from both FT and PL faculty. We are hoping more faculty, especially faculty from equity-seeking groups, will be invited to join the team.

Some of the key goals of the Working Group are to ensure that our student feedback processes are attentive to equity issues and incorporate recent research into best practices in the collection, interpretation, and handling of student feedback data. There is also commitment to consultation with faculty and student groups before implementation.

Stay tuned for updates as we continue our work towards a better, more equitable process in the coming months. 🏡

The kids heading off to college or university? Apply for our **\$1500 John Stammers Memorial Scholarship** today!

For more information and application form, visit our website:
<http://www.opseu562.org/john-stammers-memorial-scholarship>