

## President's Message: Understanding Our "Historic" Victory



Miloš Vasić  
*Acting President*

### It's all finally over!

Arbitrator William Kaplan has brought a formal end to the 2021-22 round of bargaining. As you've likely been hearing, it's very good for us; "historic" is the word used by our bargaining team. But

rather than simply rehashing the highlights of the award, I'd like to put our victory in a broader, strategic perspective. I'm doing this because I suspect some folks may read the highlights, or even the award itself, and think, "Is that all there is?"

To begin with, let's temper our expectations by remembering that this award was never going to address the 1% annual raises stipulated by Bill 124. Part of me harboured the fantasy that because the CEC (College Employer Council) and OPSEU teams would have their lawyers in tow at arbitration, they could have saved everybody a lot of time by asking Kaplan to settle wage increases in the event 124 soon gets scrapped. I hoped this because 124 is now being challenged before the courts, and also because at least

one of teachers' unions is publicly demanding double-digit increases for their upcoming round of bargaining. Unfortunately, even if (or rather when) the government loses the challenge, they could easily cite the constitutional "notwithstanding clause," and we'll have to no choice but to tough out three years of forced austerity. We're currently in Year 2. The province's teachers, who were the first to be thrown under the 124 "bus," are starting to emerge out the other end.

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# Partial-Load Committee Report

We were happy to see some much needed change to Partial Load working conditions in the new Collective Agreement (CA) awarded by Arbitrator Kaplan. Together, these changes should help to stabilize income and employment for many PL faculty.

## Bridging Benefits

Due to all the steps it takes to opt in and set benefits up (while juggling all the work that comes with new courses), some PL choose to skip them. Previously, PL had to have a signed contract in hand before the end of the previous semester in order to bridge their benefits. New language in the CA allows us to bridge benefits with only an email offer of work. This greater ability to bridge benefits between contracts is a step towards creating more equitable working conditions for PL faculty.

## Guarantee of Being Offered 12 Hours/Semester

Another step towards more equitable employment conditions is the new requirement that PL faculty be offered the number of hours they indicate they would like to teach, up to 12 TCH (teaching contact hours) per term. This is contingent upon availability of classes for which they have priority and on enrollment so classes can still be canceled, but it goes a long way towards stabilizing income for PL faculty, as well as removing much of the stress that PL faculty feel each term as they anxiously await their offers of employment.

We'll see how this change in attribution of hours gets implemented for Winter 2023. Please bring any concerns forward to your union steward or executive through their direct email or the info line at [info@opseu.org](mailto:info@opseu.org)

## Improvements to Service Credits

As anyone who has previously taught on a Monday or a Friday knows, stat holidays resulted in a loss of hours for the purposes of calculating service credits. Now, for the purposes of calculating service credits those classes will be deemed to have taken place, regardless of the holiday. Another major gain related to service credits is the new threshold of 28 hours per month. Previously, PL faculty were required to teach 30 hours in a calendar month in order to earn a service credit but they now earn that service credit for 28 hours of teaching. Having stat holidays included in the calculation of hours, and the new lower threshold for those hours, means that PL faculty will earn service credits more quickly. Not only will this enable them to advance through the salary grid more quickly, but it will enable them to accumulate service credits, and thus a greater degree of job security, more quickly. The fight for more equitable pay and credit for service is far from over, but the new criteria as spelled out in the CA are certainly a step in the right direction.

This column was written by Humber's Partial Load Committee, a group of PL faculty who gather once a month to discuss issues relevant to PL. If you are interested in joining our group, contact [chandra@opseu.org](mailto:chandra@opseu.org)

So if this round was never a fight over wages, what then was it about? What's historic, in other words, about workload taskforces, indigenization, partial-load registry changes and updated counsellor definitions? Taken as a whole, these wins go a long way to redress our position of weakness vis-à-vis management. Perhaps I'm being unfair to faculty bargaining teams of years and decades past, but let's face it: beyond job security, a decent pension, medical benefits, and six-figure incomes for full-timers halfway up the pay grid, there's a lot to be desired in our Collective Agreement. We have no intellectual property rights or shared governance; our salaries are eroding with respect to comparator groups (high school teachers and university profs); and the inequities between full-timers and contract faculty are beyond shameful.

*“The reason we’ve wracked up two consecutive bargaining wins is because we found the courage – very much so at Humber – to stand up for our demands collectively.”*

This historical imbalance goes a long way to explain, I think, why the CEC bargains so hard, refusing get a deal done at the table unless it's

100% on their terms (as was the case in 2014). They bargain as if any gain on our part chips away at their structural privileges, so they stonewall and spin our demands as “unreasonable,” “non-starters,” and even “illegal.” Their intransigent resolve has required an equally forceful resolve in response, and on that score, I daresay JP Hornick's bargaining leadership over the last two cycles has paid off in spades.

Our work-to-rule campaign and strike ultimatum successfully pushed the CEC into classic, binding interest arbitration because JP and the team understood that no arbitrator would look kindly on the CEC's obvious attempts to “hold back the wheel of time.” It was the right move, and Kaplan awarded clear language to effect real change. For starters, we're finally getting a taskforce with teeth (i.e. a neutral third party) to help overhaul of the antiquated way workload is captured. The taskforce has even been mandated to weigh in on partial-load workloads, something the CEC can't be happy about. Likewise, we asked that the partial-load registry start functioning like an actual system of seniority, and Kaplan agreed. Kaplan even annulled a previous arbitration decision (the dreaded 2021 Niagara Award), which limited colleges' obligations to eligible registrants to a paltry 7 hours per week (rather than the 12-hour max). Beginning in January, the colleges will need to offer registrants the maximum hours for which they are eligible. The specifics how the colleges will do this remains to be seen – “how” is a problematic question in any Collective Agreement! – but at least that language is now there. I could give other examples, but I think you get the point.

And what wins did the CEC get (apart from Bill 124, of course)? Nothing, except for perhaps watered-down language around an intellectual

property committee. One would ideally hope that they finally see that their take-it-or-leave-it approach has failed. In each of the last two rounds, they "bet the farm" on our inability to mobilize against their intransigence, and both times, they were dead wrong, with needlessly tumultuous results. It's time for them to change their ways, avoid a whack load of grief and work collaboratively to make the Ontario college system the best it can be. They owe it to our students.

And to be sure, the next round of bargaining is already shaping up to be important, given that we'll need to repair the damage inflicted by Bill 124 and to make good on the workload taskforce proposals. Add intellectual property and shared governance

proposals to the mix, and it's quite possible that 2024 could be the most "historic" year yet!

But let's get one thing straight: none of this will happen without your active participation. The reason we've wracked up two consecutive bargaining wins is because we found the courage – very much so at Humber – to stand up for our demands collectively. The more we voice this resolve, the less the CEC will question it. This is the only way to achieve respect and stability in the long run. More importantly, it's the only way we're going to get a collective agreement that doesn't simply constrain our working conditions, but rather lifts those conditions up.

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## WARNING: In-Process Evaluation



**Bob Bolf**  
*Steward, LFoB*

We saw a dramatic rise in the in-process (IP) evaluation factor in a number of faculty SWFs in the Fall 2020 term. This was always done without consultation with the affected faculty member.

So, as we anticipate our Winter 2021 SWFs, it would help us if we took a closer look at the IP factor on a SWF.

Article 11.01 E 2 (iii) of our Collective Agreement (CA) defines IP as "evaluation performed within

the teaching contact hour". (See the full article 11.01 E2 for a description of each factor.)

This means that at the end of the class, the faculty member has evaluated student performance and as-signed a mark. With IP, there is no marking done outside of class time. This is why it has the lowest assigned work factor of the three evaluation methods.

Examples of IP would be a music student performing a piece for their professor and the professor evaluating the performance during class time. Or a student or student group giving a presentation during class and the

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# Chief Steward's Update



Miriam Novick  
Acting Chief Steward

It's time for yet another update in which I find a way to say "there's a lot going on!" while trying to pull out a couple of specific threads worth commenting on. As ever, there's the practical side: we have ongoing grievances with

respect to faculty academic freedom, the accommodation process, the Partial-Load Registry, and staffing complements (Article 2 as discussed last time) to name just a few.

As we've discussed before, the student services that fall under Student Wellness and Equitable Learning (specifically Testing Services, Accessible Learning Services, and Counselling) remain an area of very active concern for the Local Executive and for many of the faculty working under that umbrella. Significant changes have been made to service delivery models (such as the changes in Testing Services) without the input of faculty and support staff working in those areas, and the effects are widespread. **We strongly encourage you to let us know about impacts on your students that come to your attention** (you can find me at [miriam@opseu562.org](mailto:miriam@opseu562.org)).

Beyond these concrete items, I want to shamelessly piggyback on the President's Message and report from the PLC committee to say a bit more about Kaplan's decisions with respect to our new Collective Agreement. Miloš's message this

time around ends by sounding an essential note: a clarion call to recognize this award as the result of collective action and to celebrate it by continuing to move forward in the same spirit.

*“ Arbitrator Kaplan clearly saw something different in our Bargaining Team... ”*

Arbitration is by nature conservative: not as a matter of political principles, but as part of the law's broader interest in precedent over novelty. In other words, an arbitrator will typically see their role as working carefully from the framework of an existing collective agreement rather than inventing something entirely new. To take a concrete example, this is why an arbitration award (like ours) might decide on a workload taskforce rather than directly revising how FT faculty SWFs are calculated. The CEC appealed to this structural fact when it attempted to paint our proposals as seeking massive, unprecedented change, including proposals they insisted they could "never agree to."

However, as we've seen from Kaplan's award (and as anyone who's spent time watching

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# Report from the Humber North Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee – Worker Caucus



**Des McCarville**  
*Worker Co-Chair Humber  
North JOHSC*

The Humber North JOHSC met on Sept 10, 2022. Once the minutes of the September Humber North JOHSC have been signed, we hope to post them on the Local 562 website.

Among the topics discussed:

## Ventilation Issues

The College has adopted a ventilation standard that prioritizes energy saving rather than occupant safety. Unfortunately, the Ministry of Labour has accepted this argument. However, we were able to reach an agreement with the College that they would check any classroom or area ventilation if requested. This check would also include a physical inspection of ventilation system.

A physical check is necessary as a result of a 4-month long issue where Facilities had declared a ventilation system to be functioning properly. As the problem persisted, an investigation by a 3rd party agent found the system to be physically shut and introducing no ventilation air. If you have concerns about the ventilation in your workspace please contact any member of the JOHSC worker caucus.

## Lab Safety Training

If we can deliver safety training of workers (faculty and support staff) and students in labs, we can improve the health and safety outcomes of all. The issue has been in front of the committee for over 4 years. The College is obviously “slow-walking” this initiative. The excuse given at the September meeting was that training was being provided, but the Faculties

## Relaxation of Controls around COVID 19

As of September 2022, the College is no longer actively managing COVID cases, nor is it requiring individuals who test positive for COVID to observe a 5-day quarantine period before returning to the College. There is no longer mandatory masking, or requirement to state vaccination status on entering the College. The College maintains that this is in line with the updated Ontario Public Health process.

Some members of the caucus believe this policy is inadequate to meet the health and safety needs of the Humber community. We will be discussing this issue and our response at the next caucus meeting and proceed from there.

were having trouble tracking it. In other words, they haven't figured out how to take attendance.

Such excuses boggle the brain. We will be discussing how to escalate this issue at our next caucus meeting.

### Periodic Review of Near Miss Incidents

A "Near Miss" incident is an event that did not but could have led to an accident. It can

happen anywhere at the College. The College documents and tracks these incidents in the hope of preventing a more serious accident. The caucus wants to receive a report of such incidents at our meetings. We may see if there underlying causes that led to the incident, for example insufficient training or supervision.

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# Switching Voice and Stepped Composition: Text x 3 & Betty S. Flowers' 4-Step Paradigm for Essay Writing



Tanya D'Anger  
Steward, FLA

## Text x 3

When teaching any writing, composition, or critical thinking course, I start by establishing the three distinctive ways of focusing on, engaging with, and analyzing textual content: (1) **Text-to-**

**Text**, (2) **Text-to-Self**, (3) **Text-to-World**.

The **Text-to-Text** approach requires students to confine themselves within the text's "frame" by identifying structure and rhetorical

strategy, to understand the writer's argument and purpose. At this point the student-writer remains rigidly objective and learns to use a "reporting" tone. This is where my students develop a reverse outline or map the argument of a reading in WRIT 100/College Writing Skills.

The **Text-to-Self** approach invites readers to "dialogue" with the text by finding points of connection so they can engage critically. Students start by finding personal points of connection with some of the author's arguments, and then expand to objectively critiquing these intersections in an academic style with supporting research. The key takeaway here is to get students engaging

with and responding critically to the writer's argument.

The **Text-to-World** approach requires students to step beyond the "frame" of the primary text and connect it with other textual frames: this is directly applicable to the research stage in any course.

## Betty S. Flowers' 4-Step Paradigm for Essay Writing

In my 20+ years of teaching, I've come to rely on Prof. Betty S. Flowers' 4-step metaphorical paradigm "madman-architect-carpenter-judge" (Intellectualentrepreneurship.com, 2014) as an accessible way of introducing students to essay composition. This paradigm provides a useful means of referring to the specific stages of composition.

Flowers points out that the primary obstacle for many students is getting started. They self-critique too early and don't know where to start, so the different stages of writing must be separated and carefully built up.

**1. Madman.** This is the brainstorming stage. The "madman" in us must be allowed to flow (think Mad Hatter) without interference (think Red Queen). The trick is to get students to produce an un-curated flow of ideas: set them a time limit (e.g. 5 minutes) for automatic writing in short-form (words, phrases – NO sentences!). Then tell them to take a break and come back with a fresh eye.

**2. Architect.** This is the structural design/organizational stage. At the end of the madman stage, students will have a relatively jumbled collection of ideas inspired by the essay prompt,

which they can now start organizing into an essay outline: fill in any gaps; check the logical flow. By the end of this second stage, they will have a first rough draft with full development, ready for a first edit with the help of a tutor and/or the Writing Centre. It's important they remain focused on the structural design and coherent flow of content, before connecting the ideas into flowing sentence structure and paragraphs.

**3. Carpenter.** Only when students are confident with the structural design can they shift into the carpenter stage and start "building" the essay into flowing paragraphs. This relates to unity and coherence, in addition to the fuller "toolbox" of writing strategies (logos, pathos, ethos) and devices (metaphor, allegory, etc.). It's now time for the second edit to check for unity, flow, coherence, tone, and style. This should be the final opportunity to make any major structural adjustments – before the "decorating" can begin.

**4. Judge.** Only once the essay's structure has been fully "built" can the final revision be completed under the critical eye of the judge (remember the Red Queen?!). For Flowers, this is when the mechanics (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) are strictly proofread and polished as needed. She points out that the "madman" is terrified of the "judge," while the "judge" thinks the "madman" is a waste of time! This is why they must be separated at either ends of the paradigm. The students are now ready for a third and final edit...before submitting!

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law-and-order-style television shows knows), the law is also about interpretation, and that includes the very meaning of "unprecedented" (or "unachievable"). The fact that we achieved objective gains—including some of those very things the Colleges have previously refused to consider or fought against tooth and nail, like maximizing contract hours for PL faculty – undercuts the CEC's consistent narrative over the last year.

Arbitrator Kaplan clearly saw something different in our Bargaining Team than this depiction suggests, whether in our proposals themselves or in our team's ability to do the hard work of finding ways to move our working conditions forward within these many constraints and against a bigger, stronger, unified employer.

One might say this is the core task of bargaining from the labour side: to hold together two equally true, seemingly opposing premises. On the one hand, there's the knowledge that the process has many limits, obstacles, and necessary pragmatism; on the other, there's the certainty that we cannot get what we don't even ask for, and the accompanying need to think beyond these undeniably real constraints and fight for something better. At the risk of excessive sentiment, I think this is also echoed in some of the unprecedented (that word again!) developments we're seeing in worker organizing across borders, from the Amazon Labour Union to Starbucks Workers United to our own reinvigorated OPSEU. It doesn't take much to look around and see the challenges we face in our communities both large and small. But we don't have to stop there, and hopefully we won't. We can look around, find collective purpose in common struggles, and set new precedents together.

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# Ontario Needs And Deserves A Universal Publicly Funded Healthcare System

[Joe Grogan](#)

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## Introduction

Recently, the Ford Government here in Ontario and his new Minister of Health, Sylvia Jones have

announced their plan to deal with the current crisis in the Ontario Health Care System. These comments here are intended to provide for discussion some perspectives on the real crisis to stimulate an informed and responsible response from the Ontario government.

## An Analysis

The Universal Public Health care system in our

province is part of the social safety net intended to serve the legitimate care needs of our population. It has been built over many decades by the compassion, dedicated work of thousands of trade unionists, practicing doctors, nurses and other caregivers plus accountable politicians beginning with Tommy Douglas of the NDP when he was Premier of the Province of Saskatchewan. The Public Universal Health care system he established there was later extended to the Federal jurisdiction. One of the main principles of this system is the theory and practice that such a system should be open to all, based on need, as opposed to a for profit system and the individual's ability to pay.

Ontario's Health Care System is in dire crisis. To deal with this huge problem, Ford has proposed that some care should be turned over to the private sector to deal with the stress affecting everyone in the system. Many procedures that are part of the Public System will be turned over to private, for-profit clinics. In defence of this idea Ford has promised us that services provided will be covered by our health card system not our credit/debit cards. In reality, public health care dollars will flow from our public system to the private clinics. Those who can afford to pay for the care will receive it; others will be excluded. All of us will see our cost-of-living increase as a result of the fess charged. Services that now are covered via the transfer payments and general tax revenues from the Federal jurisdiction to the province will now be paid by individuals and our families. That is morally unacceptable. To deal with the departure of thousands of nurses from the Public Health Care System due to the stress of many years of underfunding plus terrible COVID conditions for the last 2 and ½ years, we will recruit nursing staff from other provinces and bring in many nurses and technicians

internationally trained whose credentials at last will be recognized. One negative implication of this is that we lose the experience of many qualified older nurses whose jobs will be then filled by a younger cohort that will not have the experience of those they are replacing. Furthermore, these younger internationally trained people will be more compliant because they will not likely know the history of how our system was built by the blood, sweat and tears of thousands of nurses, doctors and technicians who they are replacing. Even if these new employees will be unionized, they will not have a valuable Canadian trade union experience to know how to protect themselves, patients and others. Will all nurses still be covered by Bill 124 which has limited salary increases to 1%? And will present nurses be seduced to stay as a result of the Ford paltry \$5,000 Retention bonus? Human dignity, recognition and real changes to empower workers will not be attained via such a bone-headed idea. And why appoint Sylvia Jones as Minister of this Public Health Care System when many of us believe she lacks the needed qualifications and personal strength of character to say NO to Ford's irresponsible "Ontario-Open For Business" motives and actions? And how will the current plan correct the many unhealthy facilities of long-term care, the majority lacking adequate air conditioning? How do we correct these conditions? Ford must now sit down with our workers and unions and together develop a responsible plan for the real issues affecting everyone. JCG

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professor marking the presentation as it is given. The mark is determined during the class. With IP, there is no review of the work after class. If the work is reviewed by the professor after the class, for marks, it is not an IP evaluation.

Some ADs, most notably in FMCA, Health Sciences and FAST have dramatically increased the IP factor on their faculty's SWFs during the Fall 2020 term as we went to predominantly online delivery. The increase for some courses has been substantial. Where in previous years IP may have accounted for 5 to 15 per cent in a course, for the fall term it increased to 30 per cent and more. All of this has been done without consultation with the affected faculty. Class sizes have risen, in some cases dramatically, as a result.

When we brought up this issue at WMG (Workload Monitoring Group) with the administrators, the response was that faculty had five days to respond to their SWFs and could have talked to their AD if they didn't agree with it. I understand that most faculty do not parse their SWFs when they get them, as for the most part, evaluation factors seem to be reasonable.

However, consider this a heads-up warning. When you get your Winter SWF, take a close look at it. Has your IP increased dramatically for your courses, without your input? Remember, you are the subject matter expert, not your AD.

Article 11.01 E 3 of the CA states that "Before the method(s) of evaluation and feedback are established for a course the supervisor will consult with the affected teacher(s), as a group."

The message is clear.

Talk to your AD before the SWF comes out about your courses and evaluation factors. If your IP increased from before on-line delivery days, without your input, you have five days to discuss whether the higher IP factor makes sense in your course. If your AD does not agree with you, return your SWF to your AD, UNSIGNED, but with a note that you want the matter taken up by WMG. At WMG you will have the right to state your case, why the higher IP is inappropriate. Smaller classes allow us to better serve our students at a time when individual student needs are on the rise. This is worth fighting for.

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See [contact.opseu562.org](http://contact.opseu562.org) for a full list of faculty committee members, including the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC), Workload Monitoring Group (WMG), and Union/College Committee (UCC).

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