

Newsbreak

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President's report

Stacey Merritt, President, OPSEU Local 562



It is a new decade but the number of issues that your Local is dealing with seems very similar to the previous decade. In other words, lots.

We recently met with Humber's senior management to discuss areas of concern that we felt were negatively impacting our ability to properly represent you, the members of Local 562. Here are two key issues that were presented:

1. We expressed concern regarding the issue of union representation at meetings between employees and their managers where issues or concerns are being discussed. Article 32.01 of our Collective Agreement says, *"The discussion shall be between the employee and the immediate supervisor unless mutually agreed to have other persons in attendance."* Increasingly, some managers at Humber are never agreeing to union representation, unless it is contractually required (i.e. a grievance). We recognized that a union representative does not have to be present at every discussion between managers and their staff (in fact, we have always encouraged employees to speak to their managers when they have concerns) but identified some reasons why union presence may be appropriate at the initial stage of a discussion. For example, employees may feel that they lack sufficient knowledge of the Collective Agreement and therefore, based on the topic being discussed, need assistance. We asked that the College be more open to allowing the union representative to be present and to not automatically say "no". We be-

lieve that the presence of a union representative should not be viewed as confrontational but in fact a way to facilitate resolution.

2. We discussed Article 26.10, which deals with job security for partial-load (PL) employees and has greatly impacted how courses are assigned. Since the Winter Semester of 2018 when revisions to this article were instituted, the proper administration of the "Partial-Load Registry" has become a major area of concern for many PL faculty and for our Local. Our ability to determine if managers are properly abiding by its requirements often hinges on the knowledge of certain pieces of information, some of which we have had significant challenges in acquiring from the College. We stated that greater transparency would enable us to provide proper advice to our PL members and facilitate resolution of Article 26.10 questions and concerns. We also believe it would result in a more collaborative atmosphere and ultimately minimize issues.

There were other topics talked about but I will leave it at that for now. Another meeting with senior management will be held in April to review what progress has been made. We will update you on how that goes.

I hope everyone's semester is going well and that you are happy with the learning and development of your students. 📖

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OPSEU Members Stand With Teachers

#NoCutsToEducation

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Our office has
moved to **F105**
at the North

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

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Chief Steward - Rena Borovilos
Secretary - Urszula Kosecka
Treasurer - Sylvia Ciuciura

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

Surface / Internal Mail

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Chief Steward's report

Rena Borovilos, Chief Steward, OPSEU Local 562



Partial-Load Seniority List and Service Credits

According to Article 27.04 A of our Collective Agreement (CA), in January of each year, the College must prepare and post a Partial-Load Seniority List containing the name, Faculty, and accumulated service (service credits) of each partial-load faculty member employed since the previous January. This year's list, dated December 31st, 2019, should be displayed in faculty common areas, such as mailrooms, by January 31st. Please notify the Local if the list is not in place.

As a partial-load (PL) employee, you are advised to check the seniority list to make sure that the service credit figure appearing next to your name is correct. According to Article 27.04 B, you have two weeks from the date that the list is posted to submit a written notice to the College disputing the accuracy of the figure, otherwise the College deems the figure to be correct.

Ensuring the accuracy of your service credits is important for two main reasons. First, they determine your pay rate because with every 10 service credits you gain another step up the pay scale. Second, with the introduction of Article 26.10 and the Partial-Load Registry, managers must now use service credits to determine hir-

ing priority in cases where two or more registered PL employees are qualified to teach a particular course.

If you would like to learn more about what service credits can do for you and how to calculate them, watch this short [video](#) (see page 4) or contact the union office.

Grievances

The Local is currently handling a total of *nine faculty grievances* and *thirteen policy grievances*. Five faculty grievances have been filed since the last issue of *Newsbreak*. Three of those involve PL professors claiming that their Article 26.10 (job security) rights were violated when the College failed to give them the priority they deserved under the Partial-Load Registry. In the two remaining new faculty grievances, a PL faculty member asserts that their pay rate was incorrectly calculated and a full-time professor grieves that they are being discrimination against and harassed on the basis of disability.

One policy grievance has been filed since the last publication of this newsletter. It asserts that the College is in violation of Article 26.10 by not properly giving hiring priority to deserving PL faculty. 📢

From steward, Tanya D'Anger

Opinion: The McAlevey Method to Activism

[Read more online!](#)

Get to know your CA

Chandra Hodgson, Faculty of Liberal Arts & Sciences



Get to know your Collective Agreement:

Service Credits

OPSEU Local 562
Humber Faculty Union

Learn more about **Service Credits** at:

<https://youtu.be/R4lAGhsJltY>

Educators: targets for politicians

Joe Grogan, retired Humber College professor

For the past few months, elementary and secondary school teachers have been in tough negotiations with the Ontario Government. Their current job action is indicative of the increasing attacks on public education. College faculty who participated in the 2017 strike should be able to relate to the current landscape. To date, college faculty are still awaiting news on the Back-to-Work Charter Challenge stemming from the strike. The government's use of legislation says a lot about its commitment to free collective bargaining, as well as the role of educators. Will the current government follow in Wynne's footsteps? And why are educators convenient targets for politicians?

All of us have had a teacher or mentor who inspired or stimulated us to grow. These comments are dedicated to them: first and foremost, those rare individuals were genuine human beings. They had an interest in their students and in the happenings of the world. Many of them

were and still are dedicated to social justice. Frequently, they challenged us by using examples from the real world to create questions in our heads about priorities and choices. They saw their teaching role as a mission, not just a job or career. In other words, they saw education as a conduit for making the world a better place.

Real teachers are those who lead and help others while continuing to learn themselves. They encourage us to think and to act in a responsible way, challenging many of the contradictions that exist in society. I would suggest that those who exercise power in the corporate world and at all levels of government always try to keep teachers in line through actions that limit the abilities of teachers to fulfill their mission of educating and helping others.

Targets continued on page 6

Updates to health benefits

Urszula Kosecka, Union Rep, Joint Insurance Committee



Changes to health benefits

1. Orthotic shoes

In the past, shoes such as Birkenstocks were considered as orthotic shoes and therefore covered by the benefit plan. Apparently, there was a substantial overuse of this option, not necessarily for therapeutic reasons. In order to ensure sustainability of the plan, non-customized shoes such as Birkenstocks were removed from the benefits in the fall 2019. However, any orthotic customization of any type of shoes is still covered by the plan.

2. Prior authorization program

Effective February 1, 2020, Sun Life introduced the Prior Authorization Plan for about 200 drugs. This plan requires that a patient must get Sun Life's authorization before purchasing the drug, if the drug is to be covered by the Sun Life benefits program. The drug list is available on Sun Life's web site. No logging in is required; in your search engine, type Sun Life and prior authorization; after adding the plan number, 50832, the list will appear.

3. Continuous glucose monitors

Effective December 1, 2019, continuous glucose monitors (CGM) were added to the list of covered medical devices under the extended health care coverage. CGM receivers, transmitters and sensors are covered for employees, retirees and dependents with diabetes up to a combined maximum of \$4,000 per person per calendar year. A doctor's note with the diagnosis must be provided to Sun Life along with the claim for CGM supplies.

4. New premium rates

New rates, effective February 1, 2020, were published by Humber College. Please see the *Communique* from [January 30, 2020](#).

Rising cost of health benefits

Sustainability of the benefit plan is very important. Faculty salaries are not keeping up with inflation and at the same time, the cost of diverse health benefits is going up due to multiple factors, some of them being:

- an aging workforce
- higher prices for drugs for chronic diseases, including high-cost specialty drugs
- health benefits fraud

In an effort to better protect the plan and minimize fraud, Sun Life sometimes finds it necessary to disallow certain health-care service providers, clinics, facilities or medical suppliers from claims processing and reimbursement. As soon as such providers are delisted (can be found on the Sun Life web site) Sun Life will no longer reimburse for any claims or services from these providers.

Benefits – where to find information

Humber College provides employees with a variety of group benefits. Some of these benefit premiums are covered by the employer and some by employees. If you want to find out more about your benefits here are different resources:

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Benefits continued from page 5

1. **HR Humber web site** - it provides a good short tabularized listing of all benefits; additionally, 75 page booklets for full-time (FT) and partial-load (PL) faculty contracts provide more details on all benefits. <http://hrs.humber.ca/support/support-resources/benefitsresources/benefits.html>
 2. **HR** - You may contact HR representatives.
 3. **Union** - You may contact your Local union rep (Urszula) *via* email at Urszula@opseu562.org
 4. **HRMS** - The list of benefits which you have signed for can be found on the HRMS system (you have to login). You can also see there, the benefits which you have waived. Finally, the HRMS system shows the total cost of benefits for you on biweekly and yearly basis.
 5. **Sun Life web site** – all FT and PL employees have access to the Sun Life website www.mySunLife.ca . The web site lists all services the employee is entitled to, allows for the submission of claims, shows all previous claims, gives time frames and account status for eye glasses/paramedical services, helps to find paramedical/medical service providers, and more. 🏠
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Targets continued from page 4

Great teachers prepare people to be citizens of the world, not simply as compliant cogs climbing the corporate ladder. They emphasized that we all have to look out for each other, and not simply function for ourselves. When all is said and done, they were and are agents of social change.

They tried to emphasize that individualism, greed, and only looking out for “number one” produces many of the consequences we see today in society. In the same way, the elementary and secondary teachers currently in rotating job action are fighting for the needs of current and future students, as teachers know how the proper education of students today will affect society of tomorrow.

Attacks on education are not limited to us in Ontario, nor in the present time. Governments have burned countless books, allowed

violence and harassment, and promoted racist ideas to blind people to their own oppression by scapegoating and blaming others for conditions in society.

When people choose to be educators, we become more than an influence in the classroom. Educators help build a society for all, not just for some, so we must not allow conservative forces to be successful. What we can do now is show solidarity to our fellow elementary and secondary school educators, and to tell the government that we are willing to stand and protect public education. 🏠