2023 INCOMING GRADUATE STUDENTS
INTRO to CUPE 3903 - Four Units, One Union

Unit 1: Teaching Assistants
Full-time grad students (usually PhDs)

Unit 2: Contract Faculty
(not full-time students)

Unit 3: Graduate Assistants
Full-time grad students; administrative, clerical and research work (usually MAs)
*Important: GA or Not?

Unit 4: Part-time librarians and archivists
In-Person Teaching

- YorkU has paused both vaccine and mask mandates on campus.
- We recommend that CUPE 3903 members get vaccinated and wear masks in the classroom.

Right to Refuse Unsafe Work

- It’s your legal right - use it if you have to!
- Important to follow the steps of a legal work refusal. See Right to Refuse Unsafe Work for more details.
Collective Agreements (CAs)

- CAs contain the rights, benefits and protections to which all CUPE 3903 members are entitled
- They are the result of negotiations between CUPE 3903 members and York University (the employer)
- Unit 1, 2, 3, & 4 collective agreements are available [here](#)
- We have the strongest collective agreement in North America
Stewards & Lead Stewards

- Can answer questions about the union, CA, benefits, &c.
- Departmental Stewards are the frontline contacts within a department
- Lead Stewards are member representatives on the Executive Committee
- LSU1 email: cupe3903csu1@gmail.com
We Are in Bargaining

- Bargaining happens every 3 years.
- Special General Membership Meetings are where we discuss bargaining as a union. SGMMs are also where members can vote on bargaining proposals.
- Every single worker matters in this campaign. We must work together to win.
What We Won in 2021

- Significant increases to funds to help members in emergencies
- Better data to meet an improved commitment to hiring equity
- Paid voluntary sexual violence awareness and prevention training
- Deadlines for Unit 1 contracts and funding
- Options for retirement for long-serving contract faculty
- A joint committee on job security to create ongoing stability for Unit 2
- More funding to incentivize hiring Graduate Assistants to do research

You can see a summary of the ratified changes to the collective agreements [here](#).
How We Won it

• Member-driven local. Our union’s power comes from member-engagement (all of you).
• Collective bargaining, CUPE 3903 has open-bargaining (any CUPE 3903 member can attend bargaining meetings).
• Standing up for our rights when we need to (direct actions, protests, strikes and grievances).
Current Bargaining Context

• In 2019, Ford’s Bill 124 imposed a cap on 2020-23 wages, but has since been declared unconstitutional.
• Inflation coupled with corporate price gouging is already serious problem across Canada.
• Rising rent in the GTA has also made it increasingly difficult to make ends meet while working and attending school.
Summer Organizing Training

• CUPE 3903 Summer Sessions, dealing with what bargaining is and the possibilities for action, including planning for Fall.
• We are also planning in-person and online social events during the academic year (e.g., Fall BBQ)
• Keep in touch! Scan the QR code, send us an email, and sign up for our newsletter (see below).
Protections, Benefits, & Funds
Workplace Protections

- Overwork. Complete the GA Workload Form or TA Workload Form
- Anti-Discrimination and Harassment language
- Grievances
- Equity Rights including Leaves, Accommodations, and Fact Sheet for students with disabilities
- See your CA (Unit 1 or 3) for details and other protections
Health & Monetary Benefits

- **SunLife Health Benefits**, be sure to sign-up! (no fee; lasts for 5 months after your last CUPE contract)
- **Extended Health Benefits**
- **Graduate Financial Assistance (scroll down)** (aka Tuition Rebate)
- **Priority Pool** & **Right of First Refusal**
Collective Agreement Funds

- Ways & Means Fund (Emergency Financial Aid)
- Professional Development Fund
- Childcare Fund
- Trans Fund
- Sexual Assault Survivor Support Fund
- And more!
Additional Information & Getting Involved!
Racial Justice Initiatives

- Employment Equity Committee
- Advisory Committee on Race/Ethnic Relations, Discrimination and/or Harassment
- Anti-Racism Working Group
Scan Me to Get Involved!

- New Member Contact Form
- Attend General Membership Meetings (GMM)
- Stewards’ Council
- Trans Feminist Action Caucus (TFAC)
- Accessibility Committee
- Sign up for the CUPE 3903 mailing list to stay informed
- And More!
- Currently Open Positions
Unit 1 Handbook

- Key information for new members
- Covers pay, benefits, FAQs, & more
- Available Online or from our office
Contact Info

• CUPE 3903 Contacts
• Join the CUPE 3903 mailing list
• Facebook: “CUPE 3903”
• Twitter: @cupe3903comms
Questions/comments/concerns?