

UNION MATTERS

December 2020

Bargaining 2021: What matters to you?

An excerpt from College Faculty Bulletin, December 2020

Over the next few months, you will be asked to attend your local demand- set meetings to develop your local's priorities for this round [of bargaining]. Ahead of those, your team will also send out a general membership survey so that you have a sense of what faculty across the province see as important going forward. We will also be sending out updates and research on the key issues you identify. Please take the time to engage: Your participation and knowledge are crucial to all of our success. You, together with your colleagues, determine the course of the next several months.

We invite you to start thinking right now about the changes to your working conditions – your students' learning conditions – that are needed in the face of emergency remote teaching. We ask you to keep an eye towards the future, as well, and to imagine what is necessary to support a high-quality public college system in Ontario going forward.

From our employer's perspective, it is never a good time to bargain. There is never enough money, never the right moment to tackle precarity and inequality, never a good reason to improve working conditions. From faculty's perspective, every round is the right time to bargain – there is never a bad time to make the system better.

Our power comes from our solidarity. It comes from the expertise of our colleagues, from our experience with our students, and from our belief that faculty know what it takes to make the colleges better. Together, we will bring that power to the table.

In solidarity,
JP Hornick, Chair
College Faculty Bargaining Team

Your 2021 CAAT-A Bargaining Team

Chair: J.P. Hornick
George Brown College

Vice Chair: Jonathan Singer
Seneca College

Members at Large

Ravi Ramkissoonsingh
Niagara College

Rebecca Ward
Confederation College

Kathleen Flynn
Durham College

Shawn Pentacost
Algonquin College

Michelle Arbour
Lambton College

For more information about the 2021 bargaining team members, see the College Faculty Bulletin, Dec 2020.

Need to talk?

A union representative will be available via Zoom every Wednesday from 1 to 2 p.m. during teaching weeks. Check the union website at www.local237.ca for the Zoom link.

OPSEU Local 237, CAAT Academic,
Conestoga College ITAL
Letterbox237@gmail.com
www.local237.ca

Cooperation and Support During 'A Perfect Storm'



In a Nov. 20th College Communication, John Tibbits thanked and congratulated employees for “supporting our college community and providing students with the best possible learning experience through a global pandemic.”. He further indicated that our “resilience and cooperation have aided in our success as we’ve been forced to adapt to an uncertain and ever-changing environment.” From the Union’s perspective, support and cooperation must be directed foremost to students, and to upholding high quality education and not to a best possible learning experience. Yet, it is the continued use of words such as “adapting” and “uncertainty” that have deeply concerning implications.

Let’s recall that in a Sept. 4th Communication, John Tibbits stated, “while the pandemic continues and the future is fraught with uncertainty”, he was “confident that Conestoga would emerge stronger, sharper and more resourceful as we adapt(ed) to changing needs” – but what is the cost for Students and Faculty?

We have learned much from Winter 2020 to now about transitioning classes to emergency remote delivery and at the same time, we have become more highly attuned (or sharper) to: our intellectual property rights being challenged (ie. audio/visual recordings); the need for workload protection related to online learning; accelerated inequities with contract labour; promotion of “micro” and “FAST” track programs as “gateways to career changes” in training vs. learning; and overall degradation of quality education due to lack of collegial, shared governance.

As recommended, our faculty will take their well-deserved rest and when it’s time will forge ahead with planning and organizing well before July 1st 2021 – the beginning of bargaining a new contract. And, due to the global pandemic, Faculty will be even stronger, sharper and more resourceful than they were in 2017. I am happy to report that CAAT-A held a very successful Zoom Pre-Bargaining Conference, November 20-21, wherein over 144 participants (including Locally elected Delegates, Alternates and Observers across 24 Colleges) came together as a force in solidarity to elect seven members and two alternates to the CAAT-A Bargaining Team. It is comprised of a diversely skilled and knowledgeable group of new and returning team members. There will also be a Local General Membership Meeting held in late January or early February for Local demand setting. More information from the new Bargaining Team and GMM to follow.

To ensure that you receive the latest bargaining information, the union will need your personal, secure email address, and if you have not filled out the OPSEU membership application (for our union #), please contact letterbox237@gmail.com .

In Solidarity,

Maureen Murphy-Fricker

Interim President

Murfric237@gmail.com



PL to Sessional or PT: What are the implications?

At this time of year, many Partial Load professors may be offered Part Time or Sessional contracts instead of Partial Load contracts. Keep in mind that this changes a number of aspects of your employment with the college. Here is a primer to let you know what happens if you switch from PL to PT or Sessional for the winter term.

- ▶ If a Partial Load faculty member becomes Sessional (over 13 hrs/week) or PT (up to 6 hrs/week), provisions under Article 26 do not apply for the length of the contract. Part Time or Sessional professors or instructors lose their union status and their employee benefits.
- ▶ Neither Sessional nor PT faculty are entitled to pay grid progression; time spent on these contracts does not count towards pay progression. However, Partial Load faculty, after 10 months of on-the-job experience, receive a one-step pay increase.
- ▶ Seniority (credit accumulation) would not be diminished, but it also would not increase while on Sessional or PT contracts.
- ▶ There is hourly sessional and monthly sessional. An hourly sessional is paid only for the teaching hours (usually less than PL). The monthly sessional is paid a monthly salary when other duties outside of teaching are assigned (such as Coordinator duties).
- ▶ If a person is Sessional for 12 months in a 24 month period, they would roll over to full-time.
- ▶ If a FT position comes up while one is sessional, they would be an external candidate.

Anthony Piscitelli **Steward: Doon Campus**

Anthony Piscitelli is the new Doon Campus representative for Union cal 237 and a union representative on the Union College Committee. is a Professor in Interdisciplinary Studies and Program Coordinator for the Public Ser-Program.

Anthony became involved in Local 237 out of a passion for effective representation. This same passion drove him to become involved in several college research studies examining citizen participation in organizational and government decisions. Anthony Piscitelli is also a Director at Your Neighbourhood Credit Union and a former school board trustee. His Doctorate is in Geography and his Masters in Political Science both from Wilfrid Laurier University.

As Doon campus representative, Anthony is keen to hear about the concerns of Doon campus faculty members in any school. Anthony can be reached by email at apiscitelli@gmail.com or by mobile phone at 519-998-3917. Anthony's musing can be found on Twitter at [@anthonypiscitel](https://twitter.com/anthonypiscitel)



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The OPSEU Indigenous Circle invites OPSEU members who self-identify as Indigenous to apply for a position on the OPSEU/ SEFPO Indigenous Circle to fill a vacancy in Region 2. Region 2 includes the municipalities of Hamilton, Guelph, Kitchener, Waterloo, Niagara, Owen Sound and points in-between.

The role of the regional representative on the Indigenous Circle is to create and maintain networks within the region, to develop and promote programs, to encourage First Nation (Status or Non Status), Métis and Inuit members to participate in union activities and to increase the awareness and understanding of Indigenous issues throughout the OPSEU membership.

For more information and instructions on how to apply, see [OPSEU Indigenous Circle website](#). Deadline for applications is 5 p.m. on December 21, 2020.

Conestoga Reads 2021

Moon of the Crusted Snow

You are invited to **Conestoga Reads 2021** to join us in discussing *Moon of the Crusted Snow* by Waubgeshig Rice on Wednesday, January 20th, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. in the comfort of your own home via Zoom.

Moon of the Crusted Snow is about a northern Anishinaabe community, which has been cut off from power and communication during a harsh winter. If you want to know what happens next, you'll need to read the book!

Copies of *Moon of the Crusted Snow* are available free at the Conestoga College Library or for purchase from the Conestoga Bookstore.

Conestoga Reads 2021 is being hosted by the Conestoga College School of Interdisciplinary Studies, Library Services, and Be-Dah-Bin Gamik (Aboriginal Services). A special thank you to the Conestoga College Bookstore and Student Engagement for sponsoring Conestoga Reads 2021.

We hope you will join us (whether you finished the book or not) for Conestoga Reads2021. To attend please RSVP on the Co-Curricular Portal.

Local 237

General Membership Meeting

The restrictions on gatherings due to Covid 19 have impacted our ability to hold a *General Membership Meeting* over the past year. This has impacted our ability to hold elections, update by-laws, and connect with our members.

We are currently looking at ways we could hold a large meeting over Zoom or other platforms, especially because this is a bargaining year, and your input is vital to the bargaining process.

Early in the new year, you will receive surveys or other notifications that will give you the chance to make your thoughts known. Please respond to these surveys, as they help guide the process and set priorities for the bargaining committee.

Other things you can do:

Attend an LEC meeting. We meet on the second Wednesday of every month. Contact letterbox237@gmail.com to receive a Zoom link.

Speak with your Steward. If you don't have a department Steward, speak with your campus steward or contact one of the union executives. Contact information is on the last page of this newsletter or at www.local237.ca

Meet your newest faculty representatives

Saifur Rahman

Steward: Workforce Development and Part-time Studies



Saifur is a professor of the Information Technology Business Analysis operations (ITBA-O) program at Conestoga College. He worked as part-time and partial-load faculty from 2016-2018 and then became a full-time professor and program coordinator in December 2018. Before that, Saifur worked at Blackberry, Sunlife, and Manulife financial and held technical, leadership, and consultant roles. He is an experienced leader in Lean, Six Sigma, Project management, change management, business strategy, statistical methods, and continuous improvement methods.

He received his Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) from Baruch School of Business and Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degree from LaGuardia Community College in New York. He holds a Six Sigma Blackbelt from the American Society of Quality (ASQ) and Project Management Professional (PMP) certification from Project Management Institute (PMI).

Saifur's lifelong pursuit of 'fairness' and 'equity' and his belief in "the voice of many is much stronger than the voice of one" – are primary drivers for pursuing a union role.

You can contact Saifur at saifurrah@gmail.com

Shannon Rea

Board of Governors Faculty Representative



My name is Shannon Rea, your newly elected Academic Faculty Representative to Conestoga's Board of Governors.

I teach in the School of Hospitality and Culinary Arts, lecturing in programs such as Global Hospitality Management, Bartending, Culinary Apprenticeship and Travel & Tourism.

I'd like to share a bit about me, as a personal connection between us all is what will make us stronger. I live on a farm just outside of Waterloo with three dogs, five chickens, and a rooster. I have a giant vegetable garden and end up giving away more produce to my friends and neighbours than I keep for myself. I can jump start a tractor, mingle at a black-tie event and my knowledge of plumbing and electrical hardware is impressive. A clash of cultures to some, a love of diversity to others.

I've taught at both Waterloo and Doon campuses. Currently I am teaching, as many of you are, out of my home. I bring a fresh way of thinking, and a desire to balance the immediate issues that we face as faculty with the longer-term considerations the college needs to make.

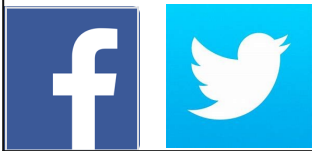
If you have any questions/concerns regarding Conestoga's Board of Governors, please do not hesitate to contact me at rea.shannon@outlook.com .

Your Union Executive

Interim President/First VP: Maureen Murphy-Fricke, Murfric237@gmail.com
 VP/Chief Steward: Michael Phillips, Michaelphillipsconestoga237@gmail.com
 2nd Vice President: Bev Stone, Bstone237@gmail.com
 Treasurer: Dennis Long, Denlong237@gmail.com
 Interim Secretary: Anna Bortolon, abortolon237@gmail.com
 Communications: Paula Crooks, pcrooks237@gmail.com



Find us online



Our website:
Local237.ca

Monthly Meetings

Monthly meetings of the Local Executive Council are held via Zoom on the 2nd Wednesday of every month, from 5 to 7 pm. All members of Local 237 are welcome. Want more info? Email lettebox237@gmail.com.

Your Stewards and Members of the Local Executive Committee

Anna Bortolon—Guelph Campus	Melanie Bourke—ECE
Bob Carder—Waterloo Campus	Paula Crooks — Brantford Campus
Carrie Herzog— Hospitality& Culinary Arts	Alicja Hunter—Communications & ELS
Dennis Long—Business	Mitko Mancevski—Cambridge Campus
Paul Pacheco—Guelph Campus	Maureen Murphy-Fricke— Interdisciplinary Studies
Michael Phillips—Engineering & IT	Anthony Piscitelli—Doon Campus
Saifur Rahman--Workforce Development & PT	Amit Rajput—Community Services
Lynn Robbins White—Counselling/Accessibility	Bev Stone—ATS Building
Sonia Waind--LINC	Judi Westcott—Trades and Apprenticeship
Ariane Wieck—Creative Industries	Wayne Wright—Waterloo Campus
Leopold Koff—Health & Safety Committee	Shannon Rea—Board of Governors Rep.

Get Involved: Stewards Needed

The following steward positions are vacant and need a full time or partial load faculty member to represent them at monthly Local Executive Council meetings.

Academic Upgrading Health & Life Sciences Wood Skills
 Stratford Campus Ingersoll Campus

Interested? Send an email to Letterbox237@gmail.com