

Talking points for discussions with students

Slide 1

- You've probably heard that UOITFA has requested a "no-board" from the Ministry of Labour, does anyone know what that means?
- Explanation: Once the Ministry of Labour appointed conciliator provides us with a "no board", there will be a 17-day period where negotiations between the faculty association and the administration will continue.
- If no deal is made during that period, faculty will be in a legal position to go on strike.
- **You are probably wondering what effect a strike will have on classes**
- A strike could affect your classes if they are taught by a full-time Faculty member including tenured, tenure-track, teaching or limited-term faculty.
- We're not sure what plans the Ontario Tech Administration would make in the event of the strike, but we will do everything we can to keep you informed. **Follow the UOITFA on our social media platforms to make sure you don't miss any updates and you can always ask me, I'd be happy to answer any questions you have.**

Slide 2

- **We do not want a strike at Ontario Tech and Faculty Members are working hard to avoid one, but we need the support of students and Ontario Tech community members.**
- You can support Faculty Members and help avoid a strike by sending an email to the Ontario Tech President and Senior Administration telling them to negotiate a fair deal that puts your learning conditions first to avoid a strike.
- There is still time to avoid a strike. Last round of bargaining, students, faculty, parents, and community members sent thousands of messages to the University which helped us to avoid a strike.

Slide 3

- Here is the link to send a pre-filled email which is customizable:
<https://www.uoitfa.ca/take-action/> or you can scan the QR code on this slide.
- Questions?

Slide 4

- So what are negotiating with the Ontario Tech administration, what are we asking for?
- For the past seven months, we have been negotiating with the university for a new contract that improves the overall quality of education for everyone at Ontario Tech.
- We're looking for smaller class sizes, more TA support so we can give you more one-on-one mentorship, time to conduct our research that in turn creates job opportunities for

students, and for female-identified faculty members to be paid the same as their male counterparts for doing the same work.

- Did you know that Ontario Tech has the highest student to faculty ratio in the country?
- High student-to-faculty ratios mean that faculty members have less time to spend with each individual student, which makes it harder for them to give each of you the time and attention you deserve.
- Has your boss ever asked you to stay late when you had plans, have you had to work during a family members birthday or miss an important event because you had to work? Have you ever been understaffed during your shift so you had to do the work of two or three people? That is what we've been going through for almost years now and it's only been made worse by the pandemic. This whole time, we've have been asking for help from the university and not getting any. This impacts the quality of education we can provide to you.
- Ontario Tech already has one of the highest workloads across Ontario and the Administration is proposing changes that would only make it worse.
- High faculty workloads have a direct effect on student learning conditions at Ontario Tech because we have less time to develop innovative curriculum and support students.
- We are looking to bring Faculty workload provisions in line with other Universities across Ontario.
- Since 2016, the number of large classes (101 or more students) have increased by 30% for first year students. Large classes for fourth year students (61 or more students) have gone up by 33%.
- When class sizes double or triple with little or no additional support, what are the chances your professor can take the time to meaningfully engage with you and provide you with the insights you need to be successful?
- Most Faculty find the time to engage anyway but that often means they are taking time away from their other work duties like research and often their families.
- It shouldn't have to be this way. You pay an extraordinary amount of money for the education you receive from Ontario Tech, so shouldn't the university use your tuition to support you and your instructors to have optimal learning and working conditions? be the best quality education possible?
- **How can bargaining between the Faculty Association and University create more employment opportunities for students?**
- Did you know that many of your Teaching Assistants are also Ontario Tech students?
- Hiring more TA's means more student employment opportunities. TA's offer critical support to faculty members and students; more TA's mean more people available to address and respond to your questions and needs in your courses.
- When we are able to attain funding for, and conduct our, research we create jobs for students as research assistants, internships, practicum opportunities, assistantships,

and experiential/volunteer opportunities which help students advance in their fields embark on their chosen career paths.

- When faculty members have more time to dedicate to their research and secure research funding, they are also able to create more opportunities to hire more Ontario Tech University students.
- We care about building a more equitable institution where female-identified faculty aren't paid an average of 13% less than men for the same work. Imagine if you were doing the same job as another person at work and they were getting paid more!
- More answers to questions can be found here: <https://www.uoitfa.ca/uoitfastudentfaq/>

Slide 5

- These are the stages of conciliation
- Right now, we're at Step 5, the 17-day period before a legal strike
- We've been here before during bargaining and we've never had to go on strike, but that was because enough people sent emails, posted on social media, telling the administration to negotiate a fair deal to avoid a strike.
- We care about the quality of your education, we care about our colleagues' mental health, we care that women aren't being paid as much as men at this university, and we're asking the university administration to care too and work with us to build solutions to these problems to avoid a strike.
- On January 18, the UOITFA is hosting a social media day of action where faculty, students, community members, parents, are invited to share graphics like this (on the slide) on Instagram, snapchat, twitter, and send an email using our simple online tool to show your support for a fair deal that avoids a strike! You can find all the info here: <https://www.uoitfa.ca/socialmediaaction/>

Possible questions and answers

- **Can Ontario Tech afford to give Faculty a better contract with all of the cuts going on right now?**
- Yes, Ontario Tech has been running surpluses for the nearly every of the past 10 years including a budgetary surplus last year that could be used to strength the quality of education here at the University.
- As well, even though there have been many cuts to the post-secondary sector over the last few years, the Ford government, through Bill 124, has also imposed a 1% cap on monetary increases to Collective Agreements in Ontario. This means that in many cases the UOIT Faculty Association is limited in what we even ask for when it comes to monetary issues. In fact, many of the larger issues on the table right now are not monetary issues. There are many ways that the Ontario Tech administration could improve the quality of education here at Ontario Tech without having to increase spending.

What's happening with college faculty at Durham college?

- Like faculty at Ontario Tech, member of **OPSEU local 354** at Durham College, and across the province, are in a legal position to take job action.
- They are currently engaged in a “work to rule” campaign where they are only doing work that is explicitly outlined in their collective agreement. This includes:
 - No unassigned college meetings
 - No unassigned and agreed-to professional development
 - No unassigned extracurricular activities
 - No holiday gatherings
 - No town halls.
- From here: <https://local350.ca/bargaining-updates-2021/?amp>

What is happening with PSAC 555's bargaining?

- PSAC 555 is currently in conciliation as well.
- Together, the UOITFA and PSAC 555 represent the majority of Faculty, Instructors, Lecturers and Researchers at the university.
- Both unions have been pushing for meaningful improvements to working and learning conditions at Ontario Tech, and the fact they both find themselves in conciliation highlights the University administration's refusal to respect its staff and prioritize high-quality education for its students.
- At this point, we're uncertain if PSAC will also be engaged in job action this semester but I'd encourage you to keep an eye on their social media. As your instructors and professors, we are stronger together and we want the Ontario Tech administration to negotiate a fair deal with PSAC 555.