

## **Who We Are**

CUPE 4207 (Unit 3)

English as a Second Language Instructors at Brock University  
(ESL Services, the Goodman School of Business  
and the Faculty of Education).

60+ Instructors

## **What do we do ?**

- a) Teach ESL (more specifically English for Academic Purposes programs) to pre-university students who receive a conditional offer to undergraduate studies at Brock.
- b) Teach ESL to Pre-Master's students in the Faculty of Education & the Goodman School of Business.
- c) Teach an ESL preparatory program every August to Master's students in the IMBA and IMacc program in the Goodman School of Business.
- d) Teach the Summer Explore ESL program to French Canadian and international ESL students every summer.
- e) Teach English for Specific Purposes programs (e.g. Applied Health Science programs during the summer)

## **Why was the Strike/lockout deadline set?**

CUPE 4207 Unit 3 and the University have been in negotiation since last Spring and the University has maintained their 'No Improvements' position. The Unit 3 Collective Agreement expired last July 7<sup>th</sup> 2014. Members of Unit 3 are supporting their Bargaining Priorities to stay on the bargaining table. After the strike deadline was requested, the University has finally agreed to meet again on the March 14<sup>th</sup>. The strike/lockout deadline is now set on March 17<sup>th</sup>.

## **How long would a strike last?**

The last time Unit 3 (ESL Instructors) went on strike was in 2012. The strike lasted two weeks. The duration of a strike would depend on a number of things (The university administration's response and support from the Brock community are two examples).

### **Is there going to be a strike?**

- Not necessarily. Our intention is to go to the bargaining table to reach a settlement that is beneficial to our members and to students. A strike can be avoided if the university comes prepared to address our key priorities.

### **What happens if we go on strike?**

- ESL Instructors will walk off the job and picket lines will be established on the Main Campus. There will be delays for anyone who wants to get onto the Brock Campus.

- We will continue to try to negotiate a collective agreement that meets the needs of our members. If a strike did happen it would end when a new collective agreement is reached and ratified by both sides.

- Many groups have protections that allow them to choose not to cross a picket line. Students cannot be required to cross a picket line, and cannot face academic penalties for refusing to cross a picket line. Many unionized workers can refuse to cross a picket line, depending on the language in their collective agreement. For example, members of CUPE 4207 Unit 1 (TAs, Instructors, Lab Demonstrators, Course Coordinators, Marker-Graders) have the right to not cross a picket line if they “reasonably perceive it to be hostile”. It is up to each member to determine if they perceive this.

### **How can YOU Help?**

- E-mail the Brock administration to tell them to negotiate a good and fair contract with CUPE 4207 Unit 3. More support from the community for a negotiated settlement is one way to help resolve issues without the need for a strike.

You can contact the following people:

- Jack Lightstone (President of Brock University): [Jack.Lightstone@brocku.ca](mailto:Jack.Lightstone@brocku.ca)
- John Suk (Chair of the Board of Trustees): [johnsuk@Xigera.ca](mailto:johnsuk@Xigera.ca)
- Kim Meade (Vice President Student Services): [Kmeade@brocku.ca](mailto:Kmeade@brocku.ca)
- Jennifer Guarasci  
(Manager of Labour and Employee Relations): [jguarasci@brocku.ca](mailto:jguarasci@brocku.ca)

## **What Do We Want?**

### **1.) Job Equity:**

Currently there are three tiers of employment groups in Unit 3, yet they all do the same function and have the same contact hours with students. If the university is to realize a uniformly excellent educational standard, they need to stop treating workers differently.

### **2.) Educational Standards:**

Workers of Unit 3 are asking for improvements to the work environment to ensure the highest quality standards of education for the students of Brock University.

The university's prime goal for the next several years is increasing the number of international students on campus. Though international students are students they are not recognized as such by the university--therefore ensuring quality education is crucial to improve Brock's reputation.

### **3.) Security:**

One aspect of protecting educational standards is to ensure that members of Unit 3, who are professionally trained to teach the English language, continue to be able to teach to the international students on campus. Parsing out groups of students to different faculty or departments diminishes the quality of education.

## **What is the Current State of Bargaining?**

- We are currently in Mediation. This is a stage in which a Mediator appointed by the Ministry of Labour sits down with both parties to try to facilitate the successful completion of negotiations. It is a necessary requirement before a legal strike or lockout can take place. Our next meeting with the mediator is on March 14.
- We began negotiations with the employer in June of 2014, and met face-to-face on three occasions with the last date happening on September 11. When it became clear that the employer was not prepared to address any of our bargaining priorities – even ones that would not cost them any money – the Union filed for Conciliation. This is a process in which the Ministry of Labour appoints a conciliator to try to mediate a settlement. The “Conciliator” changes his/her title to “Mediator” when a strike/lockout deadline has been set.
- Both sides met at conciliation 3 times between November 2014 and January 2015. The Union came to the table willing to negotiate a settlement. We demonstrated flexibility in our proposals. However, the Brock administration came to the table unprepared to make any changes that would be of benefit our members. Once again, they even refused to agree to items that would cost them absolutely nothing.

- Because of this intransigence the Union requested that the Conciliator set a strike/lockout deadline, which is March 17. We will be meeting with the employer again on March 14 to try to settle outstanding issues.

**Important Information for Brock Students Regarding Job Actions (strikes/lock-outs)**

[http://www.brocku.ca/university-secretariat/facultyhandbook/section3#C\\_6](http://www.brocku.ca/university-secretariat/facultyhandbook/section3#C_6)

**6.3 Protecting Students From Academic Penalty**

Students who choose to not cross a legal picket line during a disruption shall not be penalized. Students are not absolved of the responsibility for completing their course requirements subject to the provisions of Sections 6.4 and 6.5

**Does a better contract for us mean higher tuition fees for you?**

No.

Tuition fees for domestic students are regulated by the Government of Ontario. The government limits the amount that the university administration can increase tuition fees.

Ontario universities are able to increase international student fees as they see fit.

It is important to note that the Brock administration already increases tuition fees as much as possible irrespective of collective bargaining outcomes.