

Outsider

The Voice of the Tutor



Christmas Closure

Athabasca University will close at 4:30 p.m. on December 23, 2011 and reopen at 8:30 a.m. on January 3, 2012. ***This means that you are not required to work during this period!*** As a reminder to students who are submitting assignments, please include the closure information in your email auto responder.

Article 14.02 of the collective agreement states:

Where an employee is entitled to a minimum of 3 paid holidays a year, one such holiday shall fall between Christmas Day and New Year's Day. Individualized study tutors shall not have their block pay affected as a result of the Christmas closure of the University.



Communications Workshop – Tutor / Student communications

Group 1

1. Marking Standards: Students have different expectations from tutors (or coordinator or AU?).

Solutions:

Better communications with students and decrease amount of initial information students have to read and understand and prioritize it--so marking standards are clearer sooner.

2. Response Times: Expectations vs. reality vs. standards. Most students think 5-day turnaround for assignments vs. 7-10 days (since at least Nov. 30, 2010) and this error is still in some (or all?) Tutor Letters. [Note: this was apparently changed again September 30, 2011 to 5-7 days?]

Solutions:

Refer students to current standards, fix Tutor Letters, request LST inform Tutors when standards change (or consult if that's in the Collective Agreement?).

3. Tone Expected: Some students complain they aren't treated with due respect.

Solutions:

Need more information and details on examples? Tutors have different communication styles and don't always say "Please and thank you" and maybe don't have time to.

4. Open Question: What can Tutors do to encourage student learning?

5. Students have complaints or questions about different sections of a course having different marking standards--and even having different answers as to the correct or best answer (especially in programming style and documentation in some SCIS courses!).

Solution:

Make coordinators coordinate.

6. RUSH MARKING: there is none--inform students! Bulk or batch submissions: students don't know the rules or assume there is some way around them or that their excuse is an exception.

Solution:

Refer students to current standards (5 days to be served consecutively). Inform them of AUSU confirmation that prioritizing batch marking must not detract from regular marking service standards.

Reflections on the CUPE National Convention – Ernie Jacobson

The 2011 CUPE National Convention was held in Vancouver from October 30 to November 4, 2011. Ernie Jacobson, Ronnie Leah and Glynnis Lieb were delegates from CUPE3911.

There were approximately 2130 delegates as well as staff and guests, for a total attendance of close to 2400.

Guest speakers included, Stephen Lewis of the Stephen Lewis Foundation, Interim NDP leader Nicole Termel, Maude Barlow, National Chairperson of the Council of Canadians, MP Olivia Chow, and Marie Clarke Walker, Executive Vice- President of the Canadian Labour Congress.

One key election was held due to the retirement of Claude

Genereux, National Secretary-Treasurer. Claude Genereux is widely credited with bringing strength and stability to CUPE National's finances, which include a strong strike fund as well as the ability to help fund initiatives like the Global Justice Fund and fight back campaigns relating to contracting out, privatization and other attacks on workers in Canada. In the election, Charles Fleury emerged as the victorious National Secretary-Treasurer. Charles has been active in CUPE-Quebec, and has been on the National Executive Board since 2003.

A number of key themes emerged through the discussions, the presentations made by speakers, and from the Strategic Directions,

2011-2013 document:

- The Assault on the Public Sector and the Working Class. This includes the recent actions by the Harper government and Labour Minister Lisa Raitt in subverting the bargaining process in the postal dispute and the Air Canada dispute. The attack on unions in Wisconsin and other U.S. states is also a large part of this. Strategic priorities arising as a result of this assault include:
 - Reaching CUPE Members,
 - Strengthening the Labour Movement,
 - Reaching out to Community, and
 - Strengthening our Image.

[Read the entire article](#)

Stained Glass Cookies

Ingredients

- Refrigerated cookie dough (use your own favorite recipe or store-bought brand)
- Fruit-flavored hard candies (e.g., Life Savers)
- Plastic sandwich bags (one for each color) and a rolling pin

Additional Materials:

- Non-stick spray
- Parchment paper

Cooking Instructions

1. Pinch off small pieces of dough and roll into strips about 1/4" thick. Use to make outlines on a foil-covered cookie sheet. Pinch ends together well. Start with simple shapes and then try more complex ones.
2. Sort the hard candies into plastic bags by color. Crush them with a rolling pin. Use to fill openings in the cookies.
3. If you want to hang the cookies on your Christmas tree, thicken dough at the top and punch a hole with a straw before baking.
4. Lightly coat parchment paper with non-stick spray. Place paper on cookie sheet, arrange the cookies, and bake at 375 degrees F for 8-10 minutes until lightly browned. Cool cookies completely, then peel off foil.



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