



# Outsider

## Voice of the Tutor

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### A Troubling Development – Co-Chairs

**We are unhappy to report that Athabasca University’s Vice President Academic has decided to change the tutorial model and replace it with a call centre model.** The primary justification for this move appears to be that it will reduce costs. No other rationale has been offered and even that assertion appears to be more a matter of belief than proven.

**There has been no consultation with CUPE3911 on this matter.** We are not aware of any studies or literature reviews or the like that would support this decision.

Indeed, the letter to us that we fully reproduce below (our thanks to Bob Barnetson) has been the closest thing to “official information” received by CUPE3911.

We were aware, from the VP Academic, that there was to be consideration of such a move but told that nothing had been decided upon. It appeared to us that the work on the plan was so preliminary so as to not warrant consultation – YET.

We have begun consultations with Athabasca University Student Union and will continue these. Even at this early stage of our consultations, however, there appears to be strong opposition to the call centre model by this group. They are in the midst of sampling student opinions on this and other matters.

**We are opposed to the imposition of changes in working conditions without appropriate consultation and believe this is in violation of the collective agreement between CUPE3911 and AU both in letter and spirit of the agreement.** More will be said about this later, of course, as we explore the options open to us in stopping this rush to rash actions.

[Click here to read the entire article](#)

The CUPE newsletter is published monthly by CUPE Local 3911. We welcome your submissions, letters and comments. Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and not necessarily those of CUPE Local 3911

Editor: Dr. Robert Woznura

## I just want to say ...

### CUPE 3911 Supports EDLC Resolution Backing Quebec Students – Dougal MacDonald

CUPE 3911 has passed a motion supporting the Edmonton and District Labour Council Resolution backing the Quebec students that was passed by EDLC on May 22, 2012.

The Resolution reads:

Whereas students in Quebec are in day 100 of their strike against tuition fee increases and to provide the right to education with a guarantee;

And whereas the Charest government has refused to negotiate with the students but instead on May 18 passed draconian legislation to suspend civil liberties in Quebec, and criminalize the students and everyone who assists them;

And whereas Quebecers are opposing Bill 78, the Special Law on an unprecedented scale, with Quebecers from all walks of life including the unions denouncing the law and joining the protest movement;

And whereas students are taking the stand that the Quebec people cannot submit to this bill.

Be it resolved that the Edmonton and District Labour Council stands with the students in their fight against the tuition fee hikes and against the suspension of civil liberties and attacks on the rights of students and all of Quebec society and call on its affiliates to do the same;

And that the EDLC stand with the Confederation of the National Trade Unions (CSN), the Quebec Trade Union Central (CSQ) and the Quebec Federation of Labour (FTQ) in calling on the government to rescind the law and to negotiate in good faith with the students for an end to the crisis.

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## More on the Virtual Desktop –

Robert Wiznura

If this newsletter were a meeting, this would be a standing item. Indeed, the virtual desktop (or Citrix) has challenges and we need to know them! For example, I have been marking an assignment and the whole system has shut down on me and taken another 2-3 minutes to get back on. I know that others have experienced such things as well, for I have had contact with some of you directly. We need your horror stories to take to Labour Management and IT. We can't get things working better if we suffer in silence.

A special note ONLY for Academic Experts (given that they have to invoice every little item in order to be paid): record the time it takes to get on the system and count the time when it crashes/logs out. I have, at times, taken up to 5 minutes waiting to log on. When the system has shut down on me, I have had to wait another 2-3 minutes. This is time spent working for AU, and AU *should* be billed for wasting your valuable time. Tutors do *not* need to concern themselves for billing under the current tutor model (a model which we are currently fighting to preserve).

## Party Time: 100 Years of Labour in Alberta – Robert Wiznura

Don't forget to mark June 16<sup>th</sup> on your calendar if you are in the Edmonton area.

Head down to Fort Edmonton for a full day of festivities celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the AFL. There will be parades, musical entertainment, displays, special labour programming, games, speeches (hooray!), historical PowerPoint displays, a beer tent, a Seniors Tea, the Lionel Rault Band, Maria Dunn, pool tables and darts!!!

Tickets are \$5 before June 11: [mwerlin@afl.org](mailto:mwerlin@afl.org) (Maureen Werlin). You can also phone your requests—780-483-3021 or 1-800-661-3995— or fax them: 780-484-5928. There will be tickets at the gate on a first come, first serve basis. Check out the AFL website for details.



## You are Invited!

Come out and meet your fellow tutors. Coffee, doughnuts, and more to make your Saturday morning special!

Our next meeting is Saturday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> at 9:30 a.m. Watch your email for the agenda.

