



OUTSIDER: the VOICE of the TUTOR Volume 6 Issue 2

Why you should Attend COCAL XII this August -Journalist Paula Simons writes about the struggles of Sessional Lecturers in Alberta



You have hopefully heard that CUPE Local 3911 is hosting the [Coalition of Contingent Academic Labour Conference \(COCAL XII\)](#) this August. There is still time to register! Register by July 15 and participate in three engaging days with colleagues from across North America. COCAL XII will welcome approximately 150 delegates from Canada, the U.S. and Mexico to discuss the degraded work conditions of precarious academic workers and to strategies for an improved future for post-secondary education.

Please view full conference details [Here](#) and be sure to [Register!](#)

Paula Simons: Sunshine and shadow: Alberta university bosses take home big cheques while sessional instructors struggle

PAULA SIMONS, EDMONTON JOURNAL

More from Paula Simons, Edmonton Journal

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To learn more about issues affecting sessional lecturers in Alberta, view a recent article by Edmonton Journal reporter, Paula Simons:

<http://edmontonjournal.com/opinion/columnists/paula-simons-sunshine-and-shadow-alberta-university-bosses-take-home-big-cheques-while-sessional-instructors-struggle>

CUPE RSP/TFS Benefits – Have you Applied for this Benefit?

By Lorraine Laville, Benefits Committee

This plan, administered by Sun Life Financial, the largest provider of group retirement plans in Canada, offers Group RRSP and Tax Free Savings Account (TFSA) options to all permanent CUPE members. Each CUPE member enrolled in this benefit pays 2% of earnings for hours worked to the plan. Athabasca University contributes 4% of an employee's earnings to it.

It is necessary to apply for this benefit if you have not already done so when this was made available in October 2012. Information on how to apply and a brochure from Sun Life about the program are available in the HR & Finance Portal within MyAU under "Tutor (CUPE)" in the Pay and Benefits Section on the upper right-hand side of the page.

Your Health Care Benefits Update

By Lorraine Laville, Benefits Committee

Health care benefits for CUPE members were last changed in the Collective Agreement ratified by its membership in June 2013. Particulars of these benefits are contained in Article 35 (Health Benefits Plan) and Schedule "B" (Health Care Benefits) of the Collective Agreement. The Joint Benefits Committee maintains the health benefits program with co-chairs from each party, with equal membership representation from CUPE employees and the Board.

The Board has agreed to provide and maintain the following coverage to the maximum levels as set out in Schedule "B".

Extended Health Care Coverage

The plan includes out-of-province and out-of-country coverage, private hospital room, special treatment, prescription coverage (Direct Pay Plan; Least Cost Alternative policy; \$6 dispensing fee cap).

<i>Paramedical Services</i>	<i>Limits</i>
Chiropracist/Podiatrist	Annual maximum of \$500 per participant each Benefit Year
Chiropractor	Annual maximum of \$500 per participant each Benefit Year
Massage Therapy	* Annual maximum of \$500 per participant each Benefit Year
Naturopath	Annual maximum of \$500 per participant each Benefit Year
Osteopath	Annual maximum of \$500 per participant each Benefit Year
Acupuncturist	Annual maximum of \$500 per participant each Benefit Year
Physiotherapist	Included
Registered Psychologist/ Clinical Psychiatrist/ Master of Social Work	Annual combined maximum of \$750 per participant each Benefit Year
Speech Language Pathologist	* Annual maximum of \$500 per participant each Benefit Year

* NOTE: Benefit must be purchased upon written order of Health Care Professional

Dental Care Coverage

<i>Dental Services</i>	<i>Limits</i>	
Basic Dental	100% coverage	Annual Maximum for <i>Basic & Major Dental</i> \$2,000 per insured individual
Major Dental	80% coverage	
Orthodontia	50% coverage Lifetime Orthodontic Maximum \$3,000 per insured child (ages 6-21 only)	

Vision Care Coverage

The plan will provide a payment of five hundred dollars (\$500) every two years toward the cost of lenses and/or frames for all eligible employees, spouses and dependents.

Out-of-province and Out-of-country Travel Coverage

Travel coverage is limited to 90 days per trip.

Group Life Insurance and Spousal dependent life insurance

Provisions are set out by the group benefits provider.

Eligibility

Eligibility is confined to permanent CUPE employees.

Enrolment in benefits is mandatory. However, employees may opt out of a particular benefit, with the exception of Group Life Insurance, only if they have spousal coverage or comparable coverage elsewhere.

Benefit eligibility has been extended to those employees 70 years of age or more to the extent to which such coverage is currently available through the benefit carrier.

Premium Costs

The Board funds 50% of premium costs with the CUPE member funding the remainder. However, spousal dependent life insurance is covered at 100% by the employer.

Contribution rates as of January 1, 2008, shall remain in effect for CUPE members enrolled in the benefits plan as of January 1, 2008 and whose employee contribution rate is less than 50 %.

The board deducts each member's premium costs from the employee's monthly earnings.

An employee on a leave of absence without pay for more than three months may elect to remain a member of employee benefit programs provided that the employee bears the full cost of such participation and the employee's participation is limited to the terms of the current benefit contracts.

The employer and the union will abide by the agreed to provisions set out by the group benefits provider(s). The Joint Benefits Committee will maintain the health benefits program.

Note:

All changes to the Group Health Benefits would be on a go forward basis with no retroactivity.

AU's Zero-Based Budgeting is a Race to the Bottom

By Dougal MacDonald, Co-Chair

Recently, Athabasca University put forward the long-discredited notion of "zero-based budgeting" (ZBB) as a means of supposedly increasing the university's budgeting "efficiency" and hence "improving its sustainability". The zombie idea of zero-based budgeting was also resurrected a few years ago by the anti-education provincial Conservative government.

ZBB was first implemented in private industry in 1969 by manager Peter Pyhrr at Texas Instruments, a Dallas-based war contractor. In 1973, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, then governor of Georgia, contracted Pyhrr to implement a ZBB system for Georgia's budget process. President Carter later required the adoption of ZBB by the U.S. federal government during the late 1970s, resulting in major cuts to U.S. social programs (while war spending was increased).

In pure form, zero-based budgeting means institutional departments get their budgets stripped back to zero every year, and then have to justify every penny they ask for. This, of course, is impossible. A complete zero-based review of all program elements during one budget period would not be feasible. What actually happens is that agreement is reached that the starting point for the new budget will be anywhere from 50 to 90 per cent of last year's request.

Starting below the previous year's budget request reduces investments in institutional programs from the get-go. The ultimate goal of ZBB is to find the minimum level of funding necessary to keep programs barely alive. A basic requirement is that managers prepare their budgets to run their operations at the "lowest possible level." This resonates with the institutional aim to pay the workers at the lowest possible level, again, under the hoax of enhancing "sustainability".

Here it should be made clear that workers add value when they work; they are not a cost to society or to anyone. How can workers who produce all the goods and services be considered a cost to the value they produce within the economy? Without workers working no value is produced. Social wealth does not fall from the skies or grow on trees; it comes from work. While working, workers reproduce their own value, which adds value to the economy.

Clearly ZBB totally undermines the human-centered idea that funding must be increased each year in order that institutions such as AU provide students with the highest possible standard of education within the existing conditions. The NDP government acknowledged this need for funding increases by raising the

operating grants to Alberta post-secondary institutions by 2% in March 2016, after the anti-education Tories had slashed those same grants by 7% in March 2013.

The result of ZBB at AU will be completely opposite to what AU and the society requires. Educational programs require constantly increased funding, not cuts. Increasing funding will raise the quality of educational programs, consistent with the development of society, while ZBB will trigger a disastrous race to the bottom. Increased program funding rather than cuts is the only way that AU and other PSE's will be able to meet the ever-increasing needs of students and the society for higher and higher levels of education.

CDLC Human Rights Workshop – Learn more from a Local 3911 Attendee



By Alice Khin, Secretary-Treasurer

I attended this workshop on June 15 and 16, 2016 which was organized by CDLC in Calgary.

The workshop is about respecting human rights in the work place and addresses some the following main topics:

- Respectful and inclusive work places
- Human rights legislation
- Discrimination and harassment in the work place
- The duty to accommodate
- Human rights and the employment process
- The human rights complaint process

The facilitator was Guy Sunada from Alberta Human Rights Commission.

In Alberta, the Alberta Human Rights Act protects Albertans from discrimination in certain areas based on specified grounds. The purpose of the Alberta Human Rights Act is to ensure that all Albertans are offered an equal opportunity to earn a living, find a place to live, and enjoy services customarily available to the public without discrimination. It recognizes that all persons in Alberta are equal in dignity, rights and responsibilities. The Alberta Human Rights Act was most recently amended in 2009 and establishes the Alberta Human Rights Commission – an independent commission created by the Government of Alberta, which reports to the Minister of Justice.

The AHR Act prohibits discrimination based on the protected grounds of race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religious beliefs, gender, age, physical disability, mental disability, marital status, family status, source of income and sexual orientation. Thus, when it comes to human rights in the work place, it emphasizes the rights of the individual or group, the responsibilities of employers and employees, and the need to prevent discrimination.

The vital part of this workshop is about the information on complaint process to address incidents of discrimination in the work place. The Alberta Human Rights Commission (AHRC) provides an online complaint form and guide in PDF format as well as a word document. Before we file a complaint, we need to make sure that we have tried all other reasonable avenues for resolving the problem, but also, we only have one year from the time the incident occurs in order to file a complaint.

The workshop was attended by 18 members, very dynamic with lots of interactions, discussions, and small group discussion on case studies. One of the case studies is about sexual harassment and how to differentiate the line between sexual banter and harassment which can sometimes be indistinct. Another case study highlighted on the duty to accommodate to people with disabilities. Based on the human rights principle of the right to full participation in the workplace, employers are obligated to take appropriate steps to eliminate discrimination against employees because of some disabilities.

The emphasis and examples provided were on many work place settings but not really on academic settings. However, same human rights principles can be applied on any work places, thus it was very informative and helpful for me (personally) and for CUPE3911.

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

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