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Cancellation of Classes at the Start of Term

The University often cancels classes at the last minute due to unexpectedly low enrolments. When this occurs, faculty members and instructors are approached by their Chairs or Directors with alternative arrangements, such as to teach an extra course in a subsequent term. BEFORE

committing to anything with your Chair or Director, please contact the CUASA office (cuasa@cuasa.ca) to obtain advice from our staff/officers regarding your options. Until the University establishes a policy that includes minimum enrolments that justify course cancellations, such cancellations could be perceived as arbitrary in nature and alternative arrangements could be viewed as ad hoc. There are apparent discrepancies across campus, where some courses have been cancelled with enrolments of 20 or more students, while other courses have been allowed to run with only 1 or 2 students. Shifting your teaching to a later term can result in a substantial amount of extra preparation for you, which could constitute a workload issue for faculty members. Once you agree to alternate arrangements with your Chair or Director, it may be too late for CUASA to help, so please contact CUASA before you agree to any alternate arrangements following University initiated cancellation of your course offering. See the [October 2015 issue of the *Communiqué*](#) for more details.

CDI Denials

Article 41.3 of the collective agreement has CDI denials for faculty members largely predicated on performance in teaching, with secondary roles for research and service. Evaluation of teaching performance by the Dean can be based on both Student Evaluations (i.e. those beguiling end-of-term questionnaires) and on Peer Evaluations, although peer evaluations are rarely utilized. Via the University's Office of Institutional Research and Planning (OIRP), Chairs, Directors, and Deans have access to all of the Student Evaluations for the courses that you have taught. However, determination of whether or not to grant CDI each year should exclude the class with the lowest score for that academic year. In particular,

Article 26.7 of the collective agreement contains a post-script that reads:

*Each academic year, the one course with lowest teaching evaluation score for each faculty member and the two courses with the lowest teaching evaluation scores for each instructor **will not** be used for career decisions in accordance with Article 26.5. A maximum of 2.0 credits shall be used for any career decisions in any year;*

If you have been denied CDI, please ensure that this rule has been applied to your circumstance. Presumably, the lowest score is based on the total from all 13 questions asked, not necessarily the score for question 13 (or Question 4 in the Faculty of Science) (“imparting course material to the students”).

Student Evaluations

The default is that Student Evaluations are now done online UNLESS you request old-fashioned paper evaluations via the OIRP website, which you have the right to choose. Participation rates are greater for online surveys, but you also take the risk of having students evaluate you that do not attend class. Apart from the numerical scores, generally, written comments tend to be more human and more extensive on paper evaluations, often containing lovely and helpful sketches and cartoons. The issue has also been raised regarding perceived equity concerns about online administration of student teaching evaluations (e.g. [MacNeil 2014 Innovative Higher Education](#)). When in doubt, CUASA recommends that you **opt for paper evaluations**. The personalized link for obtaining paper evaluations can be found in an e-mail sent to you from Carleton University entitled: “Teaching Evaluation Delivery Medium Selection”. Once you receive this email message, you will need to

access the site to OPT IN to PAPER evaluations. Please ensure that you visit the website and opt in, as the default is online evaluations (doing nothing means you get online evaluations).

Basic Infrastructural Support for CUASA Members

Article 6.3 of the collective agreement guarantees that all members of the CUASA bargaining unit will receive the following items and services from the University:

- telephone service, including voice mail, but not necessarily long-distance
- computing services and support
- photocopying and printing
- instructional aids
- supplies and equipment

The phrase “supplies and equipment” could readily mean that the University will supply you with furniture, a computer, printer, and even toner cartridges, but has not meant that in practice, with such expenses largely coming out of research funds for those in units where faculty typically have and need research funds. Please contact CUASA (cuasa@cuasa.ca) and let us know what the standards are in your unit.

Do you teach in a substandard classroom?

If so, please let CUASA know. For example, several lecture rooms on campus have had so much ambient noise that instructors and students have to shout to hear one another. Do classroom computers work adequately? Why have USB connections been removed from many classroom computers? Are there sufficient numbers of tables and chairs in your classroom to accommodate all registered students? Is there sufficient chalk in the room? We are compiling a list of such

deficiencies, so please let us know if you have any concerns regarding the infrastructure in your classrooms.

Maintenance of classrooms is one place where we can readily make a difference for ourselves and our students, so, please help us by bringing these issues to our attention (cuasa@cuasa.ca). Also see the [October 2015 issue of the *Communiqué*](#) for more details.

Scholars-at-Risk

In 2012, CUASA initiated discussion around the University's new initiative bearing the name of "Scholars-at-Risk" (SAR). Based in New York, SAR "protects scholars suffering grave threats to their lives, liberty and well-being by arranging temporary research and teaching positions at institutions in the network as well as by providing advisory and referral services." This initiative became a reality in October 2013. The University of Ottawa later joined the initiative thereby making a joint initiative. We now even have a student chapter of SAR on campus! Clearly CUASA is, and should be, proud to have launched such a noteworthy campaign. As a result of long negotiations between CUASA and the University, Carleton along with the University of Ottawa, hosted their first joint Scholar-at-Risk in the Department of Law, last year.

Note that CUASA's contribution involves a yearly \$15,000 commitment from faculty (which the University matches) and we are VERY SHORT of that target this year. We are already in discussions with our next scholar but need your commitment to make this a reality! Does it seem like we're asking for a lot? For example, if a group of 12 dedicated CUASA members donated \$25 per week, every week, annually, we would reach our goal every year! You can donate at the future funder website ([Scholars At Risk](#)

[Fund](#)) or make a one-time donation, if you prefer. Please give so that a “Scholar-at-Risk” may experience freedom of speech, thought, and other such freedoms that we enjoy and take for granted here.

Collective Bargaining

The current collective agreement ends in early 2017. Therefore, please provide your input into what CUASA should be negotiating on your behalf during the next round of collective bargaining. CUASA will need many volunteers to assist with all elements of the bargaining process, including research and mobilization. Your input truly matters here. Furthermore, collective bargaining is a key topic on the agenda for this week’s CUASA General Membership Meeting, which we hope you will attend.

The next General Membership Meeting will be held on Thursday, September 29, 2016, 11:30 am – 1:30 pm, in Herzberg 4351.

Current Vacancies on the CUASA Steering Committee

We are still looking for nominees for the following three positions on the CUASA Steering Committee:

- Salary and Benefits Officer
- Nominations and Elections, Chair
- Instructor Representative

Please consider stepping forward for one of these important positions. Nomination forms can be obtained from Deborah Jackson in the CUASA office or by emailing cuasa@cuasa.ca for further information. Nomination forms require the signature of two nominators that are CUASA members. Please send signed nominations forms to CUASA (2006 Dunton Tower). Thank you.

**Calendar of CUASA Council and General
Membership Meetings**

CUASA members are encouraged to attend and speak at CUASA Council and at General Membership meetings. The only difference between the two types of meetings is that only Council Members can vote at Council, whereas all CUASA Members can vote at General Membership meetings. So please come and participate!

Date	Time	Room	Meeting
2016-2017			
For 2016:			
Thurs., Sept. 29th	11:30am-1:30pm	4351 HP	General Membership
Mon., Oct. 17th	1-3pm	1006 DT	Council
Wed., Nov. 16th	2-4pm	2017 DT	Council
Thurs., Dec. 8th	1-3pm	4351 HP	Council
For 2017:			
Mon., Jan. 9th	10am-12pm	4351 HP	General Membership
Mon., Jan. 9th	12-2pm	4351 HP	Council to follow
Mon., Feb. 13th	10am-12pm	4351 HP	Council
Fri., Mar. 17th	10am-12pm	4351 HP	Council
Thurs., Apr. 13th	11am-1pm	4351 HP	General Membership
Thurs., Apr. 13th	1-3pm	4351 HP	Council to follow





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