

# CUASA COMMUNIQUÉ

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## **Matters of Concern**

There is always pressure in our world for increased efficiency and more productivity. However, those demands are properly constrained at Carleton by procedures both the employer and CUASA have agreed to, as spelled out in the Collective Agreement, and by past practice. As one might expect during a period of rapid change and at a time when the provincial government is imposing ever more dire expectations on the secondary education system, it is not surprising to see a trend to top-down management; administrations feel compelled to encroach on faculty rights and established procedures without “losing time” in consultation and collective decision-making. Such tendencies are not surprising, but also not reassuring, and certainly not to be taken lightly. Often a little more time spent on how to make changes will save time and yield better results.

Both the Steering Committee and Council are monitoring the implementation of centralized scheduling. Concern is growing that the procedures are confused and confusing, that not everyone has been given clear information about what the procedures are, and that members may have no appeal against arbitrary decisions driven by claims of system exigency. If you are troubled about is happening in your unit or to you in this regard, let your CUASA representative know so that the problems can be passed on to Steering Committee and to CUASA’s representatives on the Centralised Timetabling Committee (Zeba Crook and Claus Koestler).

Another area of the Collective Agreement to keep in mind is academic freedom. The principles are clearly stated in Article 4:

- 4.1 The common good of society depends upon the search for truth and its free exposition. Universities with academic freedom are essential to these purposes both in teaching and scholarship/research. Employees are entitled, therefore, to:
- (a) freedom in carrying out research and in publishing the results thereof,
  - (b) freedom in carrying out teaching and in discussing his/her subject and,
  - ©) freedom from institutional censorship.

Academic freedom carries with it the duty to use that freedom in a manner consistent with the scholarly obligation to base research and teaching on an honest search for truth.

<http://www.caut.ca/cuasa/agreement/s6.html#s6>

Academic freedom includes the right to be an active participant in discussing policies of the University. The point is underscored by the

## UNESCO Recommendations on Higher Education and Teaching:

### B. Self-governance and collegiality

31. Higher-education teaching personnel should have the right and opportunity, without discrimination of any kind, according to their abilities, to take part in the governing bodies and to criticize the functioning of higher education institutions, including their own, while respecting the right of other sections of the academic community to participate, and they should also have the right to elect a majority of representatives to academic bodies within the higher education institution.
32. The principles of collegiality include academic freedom, shared responsibility, the policy of participation of all concerned in internal decision making structures and practices, and the development of consultative mechanisms. Collegial decision-making should encompass decisions regarding the administration and determination of policies of higher education, curricula, research, extension work, the allocation of resources and other related activities, in order to improve academic excellence and quality for the benefit of society at large.

Inside their classrooms, faculty have an obligation to teach the course content as defined in the Calendars [Collective Agreement 15.2(b)], but how best to do that is their responsibility to decide [Collective Agreement 15.2(d)]. Matters such as which textbooks to select or the format of instruction reflect each faculty member's own disciplinary interest and pedagogical philosophy. Similarly, grading and evaluation of students are the primary responsibility of the faculty members, not of governments, university administrators, or "customers" (formerly known as students).

Procedures for the evaluation of CUASA members as teachers are clearly outlined in the Collective Agreement (Article 26). Changes to those procedures, such as statistical sampling of student performance in a given class, have not been negotiated. Any members of CUASA who are called to account outside the procedures for how they design their courses or evaluate students should immediately and always notify CUASA.

The procedures of efficiency can sometimes make us feel as though we are only small cogs in a big machine. That is especially when we need solidarity. By sharing information with and through CUASA and by working together we can do our best to work effectively without surrendering our rights or giving up our dignity.

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### **Tenure and Promotion Workshop**

CUASA is currently preparing a T&P Workshop to be held on Tuesday, April 3 or Tuesday, April 10. If you are interested in attending this workshop, we'd appreciate you letting us know that you want to

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### **Medical Research Study**

We have been asked to publish the following call for volunteers to participate in a medical

research project and do so, without any specific endorsement.

I am a postdoctoral researcher at Health Canada and I am running a human nutrition study that looks at the effect of calcium supplementation on iron absorption in young woman. We are recruiting female volunteers for the study in the Ottawa region. Please note that the study has been approved by both Health Canada and the Carleton University Research Ethics committee.

For further information, please contact: [karima\\_benkhedda@hc-sc.gc.ca](mailto:karima_benkhedda@hc-sc.gc.ca)

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