

February 25, 2022

Re: Solidarity with York University Faculty Association

The Executive Committee of CUPE Local 3906, representing over 3,000 contract academic workers (teaching assistants, sessional faculty, and postdoctoral fellows) at McMaster University, stands in solidarity with the York University Faculty Association, as their Executive has called for a strike vote. Faculty at York have been working under an expired contract since May 1 of last year, and their bargaining team has met with university administration 17 times to try to reach an agreement under the constraints of Doug Ford's anti-worker Bill 124. Despite their best efforts, the administration at York refuses to address their concerns around workloads, fair compensation and benefits, equity in hiring, privacy, and research support.

York's unwillingness to bargain with the Faculty Association on the proposals that matter most to its members is a continuation of a disturbing trend, both at York and in the broader post-secondary education sector. Over the years, York has become infamous across the province for provoking bitter strikes by its workers with its complete disrespect for collective bargaining. College Faculty across the province have been working-to-rule as the College Employer Council refuses to offer meaningful improvements to workload issues and holds to a rigid interpretation of Bill 124. Earlier this month we saw a strike at Ontario Tech University over similar issues. Here at McMaster, the administration continues to offer no meaningful improvements with respect to wages, job security, retirement security, or working conditions in our ongoing round of Sessional Faculty bargaining.

Post-secondary employers across the province seem resolute in their desire to extract as much work for as little as humanly possible from their workers, despite having enriched themselves substantially throughout the pandemic. They are banking on the assumption that we won't strike as the pandemic drags on, or that if we do, students won't support us. For the sake of our working conditions—and by extension, students' learning conditions—we must be willing to prove them wrong, as the Faculty Association at OTU recently did. As YUFA members vote on a strike mandate, CUPE 3906 stands ready to support them, and we encourage education workers across the province to join us.

Solidarity!

The CUPE 3906 Executive Committee