



FAIR EMPLOYMENT WEEK

NOVEMBER 19-23, 2007
FLYERS

UPEIFA

FLYER #1

DID YOU KNOW...?

Unfair Employment at UPEI

There's a crisis in academic staffing at North American universities, and it has certainly hit UPEI. Across the continent, full-time, secure academic positions are increasingly scarce, while the poorly paid and exploitative contract positions are abundant. On our own campus, where years ago sessional instructors were hard to find, fully a third of UPEI professors are sessional instructors - that's one sessional professor for every two fulltime, tenure-stream professors. Across the university this year, sessional instructors teach more than a quarter of all courses, with combined enrolments of more than 10,000 students. In a few departments, most course offerings and most students are taught by sessional and contract academic staff.

So what's wrong with this picture?

Sessional instructors at UPEI, like contract staff across the continent

- ▶ Are paid a disproportionately small, per-course stipend
- ▶ Are excluded from participating in the university pension plan
- ▶ Are denied traditional academic rank
- ▶ Have limited job security
- ▶ Are expected to maintain professional standards - but given little opportunity to do so
- ▶ Participate in research activities only on a voluntary, unpaid basis
- ▶ Lack adequate office space and resources
- ▶ Are unsupported by professional development, research, or travel funds
- ▶ Are excluded from academic governance

Our sessional instructors are faithfully and energetically teaching, counseling, and representing our disciplines and our university to our students. It's time to recognize their contributions - with fair pay and fair working conditions.

FLYER #2

KNOW IT ALL??

Sessional Dollars and Sense

Few are aware of the significant financial contribution that sessional instructors make to the University. During the 2007 calendar year

- ▶ Sessional instructors taught 406 courses at UPEI, with an average enrolment of 24.6 students.
- ▶ At current lower tuition rates of \$440 per course, students paid a total of \$10,824 for each of these courses.
- ▶ The average sessional stipend in 2007 was \$4,127 -- \$6,697 less than what the University "made" in tuition for each course.
- ▶ The total financial contribution made to UPEI by sessional instructors in 2007 over 406 courses was **\$2,718,982**.

To staff all of these courses with fulltime, tenured faculty, the University would have to spend an extra \$800,000 -- \$4,000,000 in salaries alone. We all know that the cost of putting on a university course is more than the salary of the professor. Yet **\$2,718,982*** is a pretty big number!

Academic and professional expertise, classroom know-how, dedication to students - and a huge financial contribution. Perhaps it's time to name one of our beautiful new campus buildings for the sessional instructors who in so many ways are giving so much.

Figures are approximate and are based on various UPEI sources. Excluded from calculations are tutorials and courses for which enrolments are unavailable; instructors' expenditures on books, computers, and professional activities; and students' higher tuition rates in Winter, 2007.

FLYER #3

DID YOU KNOW...?

Talk to the Hand!

The idea of "sessional contracts" and "sessional stipends" presumes that, once a sessional professor finishes teaching a course, he or she has no relationship with the University. Until the Faculty Association negotiated for seniority and right-of-recall rights, the University acknowledged no obligations of any kind to sessional faculty, no matter how long or intensively they had been teaching for the university.

The current contract system distorts the relationship between the University and its academic staff. No matter how many years sessional instructors faithfully teach, coach, and counsel UPEI students - and some have been doing so for decades - the university acknowledges no on-going relationship with them: they are permanently impermanent. And, unlike almost all full-time employees on campus, when part-time contract

instructors eventually stop working (if they can afford to), they will have no UPEI pension at all.

The "talk to the hand" approach sometimes shows up in the way contracts are handled. For example, this year, contracts in one department did not appear until the 2nd week of classes, with pay to start on October 5. Nevertheless, all 10 sessional instructors taught their classes as if nothing had happened. The University's carelessness toward its employees was met with the usual dedication and service.

FLYER #4

KNOW IT ALL??

Two-Tier University

Increased use of contract staff at UPEI has divided academic work into two tiers in a way that benefits neither group and weakens the academy as a whole. Fulltime, tenure-stream academic staff must absorb the service and research function of the whole University. Meanwhile, sessional and other contract faculty are marginalized, their capacity to perform other academic tasks denied.

As a result,

- ▶ The University misses out on the full range of contributions that contract staff could offer.
- ▶ The administrative burden in departments with many sessional instructors falls heavily on the few full-time faculty.
- ▶ The community of scholars is divided as full-time faculty are sequestered into a shrinking portion of all faculty.

- ▶ The new, expanding academic underclass is prevented from participating fully in the University.
- ▶ The traditional academic relationship between teaching, research, and service is distorted.
- ▶ The collegial model of academic governance is compromised.
- ▶ Full participation in University planning is in fewer hands.

Sessional and other contract instructors understand fully the intrinsic rewards of university teaching. What could be better than accompanying bright and engaged young people on their educational journey, or going to work amid scientists, intellectuals, and artists on a beautiful, leafy campus? Many sessional instructors are proud to be able to make a difference to their students and to the University.

But the increased reliance on contract, "contingent," academic labour on our campus creates deeper issues than have been acknowledged. It's a short-term, short-sighted measure that has longterm, troubling consequences.

FLYER #5

DID YOU KNOW...??

The Pro-Rata Solution

How can university communities address the staffing problems that beset our academy today? The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) has a response: we must move from a per-course stipendiary system for contract academic work to a pro rata system.

The pro-rata model defines and compensates part-time work as a percentage of full-time work. CAUT asserts that the pro-rata model is the best way to restore the essential integrity of scholarly work, which is founded on research, teaching, and service together. Under the pro-rata system, all academic appointees would participate in all three areas of activity.

CAUT's pro-rata plan would

- ▶ Make impossible the exploitation of full and part-

- time "teaching only" positions.
- ▶ Provide part-time staff access to a full career and full participation in our institutions.
- ▶ Undermine the financial incentive to use less than full-time appointments.
- ▶ Ensure the fair remuneration of contract staff - including compensation and support for course preparation, student supervision, research and professional activity, service, and professional development.

Here at UPEI, the increasing use of contingent labour to fulfill ongoing staffing requirements cannot continue. Underfunding and administrative flexibility are not sufficient grounds for hiring contract academic staff as a substitute for continuing appointments. The wholesale conversion of tenured appointments into ill-supported contract work creates havoc for our entire campus community.

Perhaps it's time to consider a pro-rata model at UPEI!

Adapted from materials at www.caut.ca